NEW TIMES

The adventures of the Popular Labour Alliance in Russia

October 1–7, 1991

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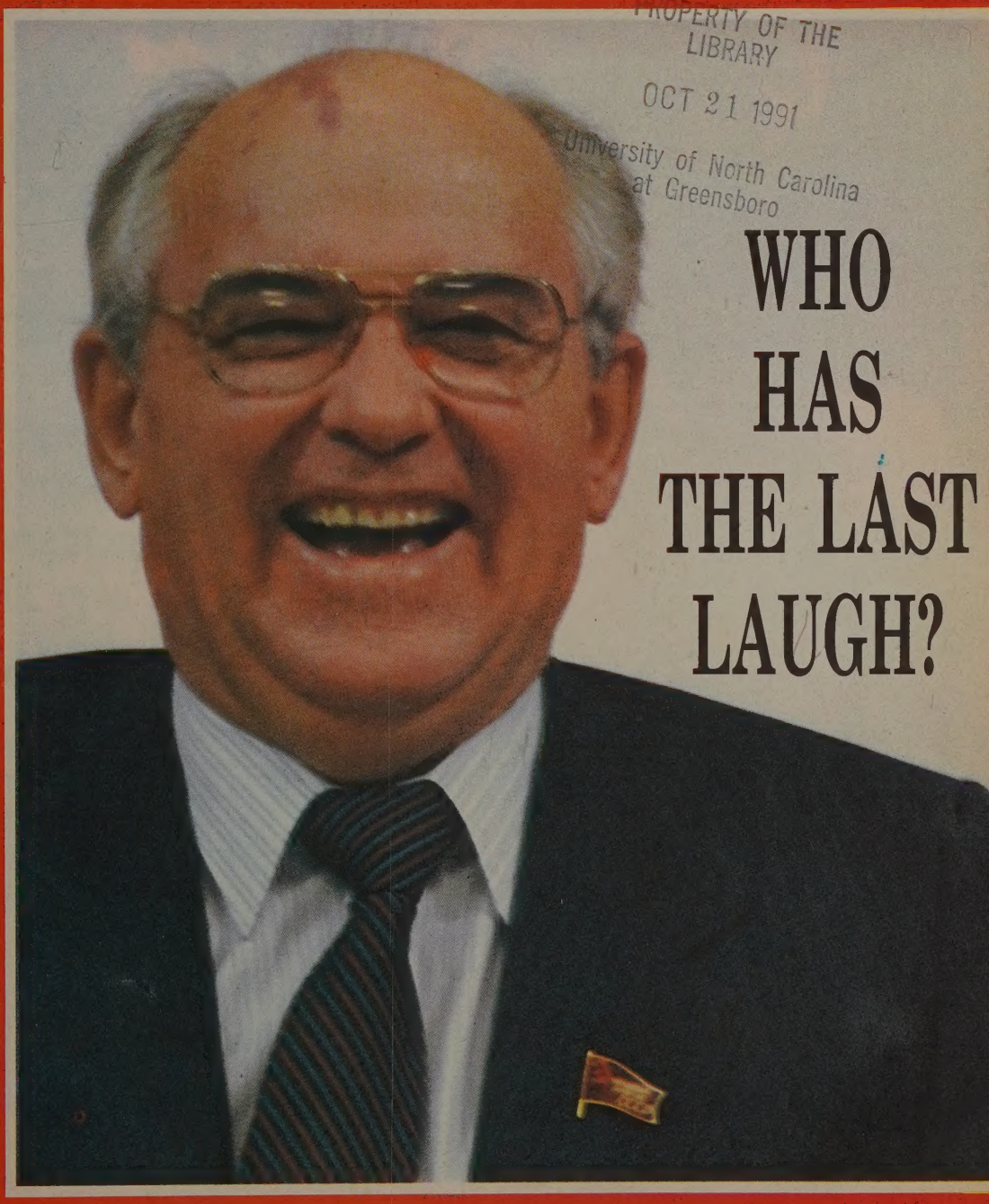

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NATION

POLITICAL LIFE *M. Shakina* **PRESIDENTS ON PARADE** 4

OBSERVER'S VIEW *G. Ariyevich* **IN THE WHITE HOUSE AFTER THE PUTSCH** 7

POLITICAL PORTRAIT *A. Pankin, S. Heym*
GORBACHEV – IN PROFILE AND EN FACE 8

GEORGIA *A. Braun, S. Katz* **GEORGIA'S DANGEROUS MARATHON** 12

FEMALE LOGIC *T. Ivanova* **FREEDOM COMES NAKED** 15

AFTER THE PUTSCH *P. Karp* **DECIDE FOR YOURSELF** 16

WORLD

GERMANY *D. Pogorzhelsky* **OF KINGS AND FLAGS** 18

ISRAEL *Sh. Avineri*
THE SOVIET CONTRIBUTION TO THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS 21

HUNGARY *L. Shishelina*
THE WAY FOR THE DEMOCRATS HAS BEEN PAVED BY SOCIALISTS 22

HUMAN RIGHTS *S. Kovalyov* **THE WISE STATE OPENS ITS BORDERS** 25

THIRD BASKET

PAST AND PRESENT *B. Miller*
THE ADVENTURES OF THE POPULAR LABOUR ALLIANCE (NTS) IN RUSSIA 28

OBSERVER'S VIEW *Y. Borovoi* **CAN'T ANYONE HEAR ME?** 31

BACKSTAGE STORY *A. Morozov* **OUR MAN IN KABUL** 32

DISCUSSION FORUM *S. Soloveichik*
THE CAPITALIST CADRES DECIDE EVERYTHING 34

WORLD PAPER IN *NEW TIMES* **A PLASTIC PARADISE** 37

MANUSCRIPTS DO NOT BURN *M. Novak* **SOCIALISM AS HIGHMINDEDNESS** 41

CULTURE AND POLITICS *S. Chuprinin* **A SPLIT IN THE WRITERS' COMMUNITY** 46

LAUGHTER THROUGH TEARS *A. Kuzhel*
INDEPENDENT POLITICAL INVESTIGATION 48

FROM OUR MAILBAG **(2)**, PEOPLE **(44)**

Cover by Dmitry Borko

Georgia.
How the Moscow putsch affected Zviad Gamsakhurdia's fate

p.12

Which rubles are better: plastic or wooden ones?

p.37

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From our mailbag

■ I was greatly amazed and bewildered as I followed the discussion of the law on leaving and entering this country within the framework of the USSR Supreme Soviet and on the pages of your magazine. All the arguments were focused on the question of how much this law would cost. And no one said: "Dear comrades! This law will bring us billions. And not in rubles, but in hard currency, not in the distant future when our compatriots rush to the West in search of work, but the next day after the law is adopted!" You know why? Our border is part of the GULAG, its last fence, so to speak. Enormous sums have been spent and are still chanelled not to stop spies from penetrating this country, but to stop our citizens from leaving their native land without the authorities' permission. Why do we now need such numerous border guards and such strictly defended borders? All this was too expensive before, and now at the time of crisis it is simply ruining us.

When the law comes into force, we would be able to tell the Finns quite frankly: "Ladies and Gentlemen! If you don't want your border to be turned into a complete mess in a couple of weeks, put reliable guards there, and enlist the efforts of the country's entire male population. Or keep our Finnish border region at your own expense." I believe that those countries which share a border with us will realize what suits them better – a peaceful life and well-being or an unprotected border.

To make it short, the following conclusion should be made. When the law on entering and leaving the country is adopted all our border fortifications should be dismounted. All that should be left at the frontier are the posts and border check points to make it more convenient to cross it. Let the Finns, Poles and other nations catch our tramps, try them according to their own laws and put them in their own prisons.

Valery Ochkov
Moscow, USSR

■ I do not agree with the claims submitted to *New Times* by a serviceman G.Burya (No.13, 1991). I think that pluralism does not mean printing in the same publication polar political views. I have never wished to meet on the pages of your magazine people like Polozkov, Nina Andreyeva, black-and-red colonels and other Bolsheviks and empire advocates. I am an emotional person and was outraged to read about the attack on Tatyana Ivanova and Simon Soloveichik. They raise the most burning questions and write brilliantly. "May be that's enough exposing?" asked G.Burya. I do not remember who said that journalists are the watchdogs of democracy. Not so long ago our journalists had nothing to guard, since we had no democracy to speak of. But under totalitarianism the task of journalists is to expose its evils. This is a dangerous and a noble mission, which helped lackeys to turn into citizens. What other creative labour was your reader expect-

The third force. Who are they?

■ The establishment of a National Socialist Party in Germany in 1919 was not taken seriously then. The noisy frequenters of Munich beer pubs were regarded as ordinary hooligans. People thought that Germans were a serious and cultured nation and would never follow them. But the Germans did follow the Nazis.

I firmly believe that we underestimate the danger of our own home-made fascism. Fascism is hatred for other nationalities, for political pluralism and liberal intelligentsia. It is a longing for a firm hand and "order." It is readiness to oppress dissidents. All these qualities are typical of national-patriots.

Today the situation in the country reminds one of the Weimar republic in the 1920s. Deep economic crisis, difficult financial position of the population, lack of trust in the country's leadership aggravated as it is by interethnic conflicts and the disintegration of the USSR – all this makes a favourable background for strengthening the positions of the third force.

At the presidential elections in Russia our "Fuehrer" Zhirinovsky (whatever he may call himself) received almost 8 per cent of votes, taking the third place.

The success of democrats will lead to the consolidation of the following reactionary forces:

Orthodox Communists

These people have forgotten nothing and have learnt nothing. They feel nostalgia for the past.

Russophile monarchists

It would be naive to think that at the end of the 20th century Russia will restore monarchy and isolate itself from the rest of the world focusing entirely on its own interests and problems. Yet, there are quite a few prominent and talanted people calling themselves Russophile monarchists, such as Valentin Rasputin, Vasily Belov, Vladimir Soloukhin and Igor Shafarevich. They can be respected for their uncompromising efforts to revive Russian village and to preserve nature. But their search for enemies among aliens and claims that the democrats are eager to sell Russia to foreigners put them on the same level with national-patriots.

Great power chauvinists

Their main goal is to preserve the country's unity and integrity and restore its former "grandeur." What flag the great power will have is a secondary question for them.

National-patriots

Soon they will be very dangerous to the democrats. Boris Yeltsin has been given the trust credit for a year or a year and a half at most. If living standards do not change for the better, many people will turn away from him and join the "patriots."

Yuri Lukyanov
Odessa, USSR

The third force

The opening of the borders will save us billions

Journalists are the watchdogs of democracy

ing from publicists? Should they carry bricks or march on the drill-ground? As for the generals and colonels with red-and-black stripes, surely they did not overwork. But they overdid it on commanding – and not only in the army.

N.Smantser (Danilova), worker
Minsk, Byelorussia, USSR

■ In proportion to its gross national income our country has the greatest military expenditures in the world. With no apparent need we continue to support a 3-million-strong army. Though the Soviet Baltic republics proclaimed their independence, they are willing to maintain ties with the USSR not only in the economy, but in defence, too. The military claim that this country would now face the threat of an attack from a potential enemy through the Baltic territory. But it was Lenin who agreed to recognize those countries' independence – that very same Lenin in whose name the military swear so often nowadays. The Baltic states established diplomatic relations with Soviet Russia prior to other countries. It seems that we admitted that the Baltic republics had been seized by Stalin as a result of his collusion with Hitler and that when Nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union this collusion did not help us at all. Why then does the army leadership oppose the Baltic republics' independence? Don't you think that the price we have to pay for the strategic wisdom of our generals is too dear?

Suffice it to recall the activity of Colonel General Rodionov, who, under the guise of struggle against separatism, fanned separatist sentiments in Georgia. It was largely due to the tragic events of April 9 that an anti-Communist and anti-Soviet government came to power in the republic. We managed to spoil our relations with Armenia the same way. And our position in the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan is far from neutral.

Instead of the endless talk about someone who is discrediting our army, we should hold accountable those army officials who are stubbornly discrediting it.

Adrian Makedonov, a civilian who nevertheless has all the reasons to consider himself a patriot
St.Petersburg, USSR

■ Valentin Petrushin's article "Burnt-out souls" (issue No.25, 1991) about the sick psyche of our society could, not so long ago, be regarded as something which "could seriously undermine the foundations of our state." In the past the author would surely find himself in a lunatic asylum for such "harmful" work. But times have changed, and let the Lord help Petrushin publish similar articles over and over again, especially in *New Times*.

I would like to offer my help in curing our society through implementing a national project of assisting the UN World Campaign of Informing the Public about Human Rights through teaching human rights in primary and secondary school and also through spreading other UN human rights initiatives. The project is aimed at raising the cultural level and the nation's intellectual potential.

If you find our ideas interesting, contact us at:

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36, Prospekt Mira, room 302,
Moscow, 129010, USSR.
Telephone: 280–41–66.
Telefax: 288–9587.
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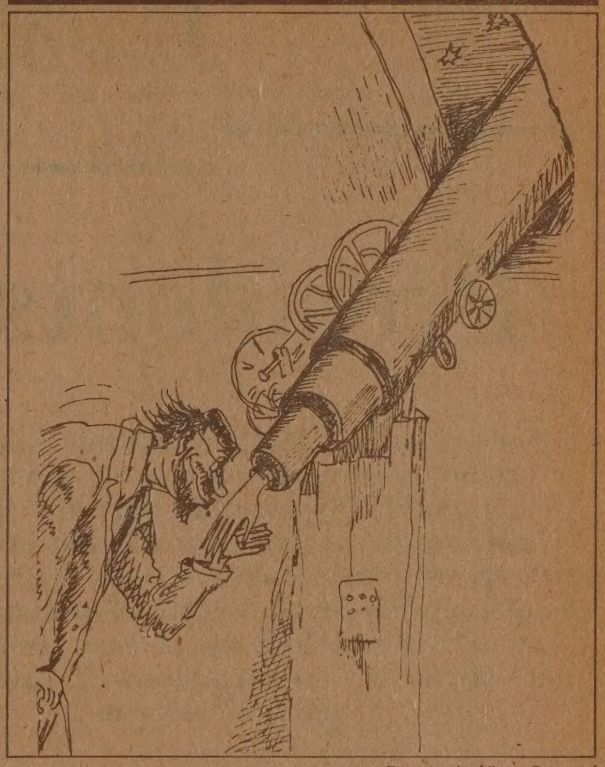
Georgy Sukhomlin, group coordinator
Moscow Region, USSR

■ The investigation launched against the leaders of the abortive coup must not shadow their active participation in deliberately fanning the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorny Karabakh, and especially such a grave crime as the Armenian villagers' deportation. Of course, they did not do it alone, but together with such "brothers-in-arms" as Victor Polyanichko, the secretary on ideology of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist Party, and Leonid Kravchenko. The latter organized a campaign of lies and misinformation about that crime. The moral and professional makeup of these two figures was no secret either for the people or for Mikhail Gorbachev. Suffice it to recall what *New Times* said about them.

I ask presidents Gorbachev and Yeltsin and all those who support justice and peace in this long-suffering country to take any steps possible to do away with the crime, and immediately and unconditionally return all the illegally deported citizens of the USSR to their homes: Meskhetian Turks, Azerbaijanians and Russians.



Drawing by Victor Bogorad

A decree on this issue should be passed and implemented as soon as possible.

V.Avanesov
Moscow, USSR

■ Your publication has deteriorated in quality in recent years. What happened to your coverage of the world? Now all we get is this navel-gazing focusing on your internal "problems." That would be fine, except it is all from a unitary ideological perspective – while all the while you criticize "conservatives" for foisting the same on the country. I guarantee that the trend represented by your magazine is aiding in leading your nation into chaos.
Sincerely,

Dr. Gerald Horne, Prof. and Chair. Department of Black Studies University of California,
Santa Barbara, USA

***Compiled by* T.Chernova**

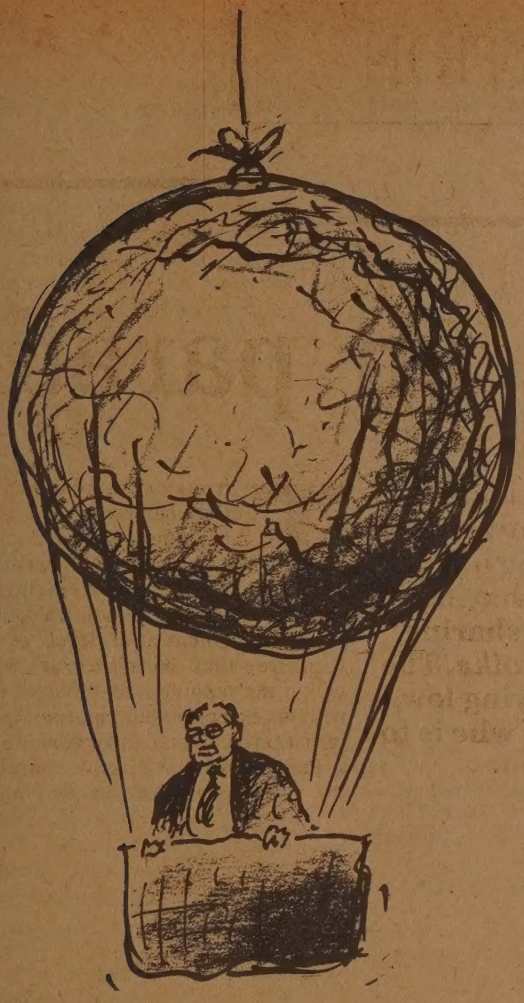
POLITICAL LIFE

Presidents on parade

The first post-putsch month has passed. The democrats' euphoria is over, and now it's sharing time. The republics are sharing out the inheritance of the Union. Russia is sharing Party property. Political leaders are sharing responsibility for the errors of *perestroika*. The putschists and their supporters are lying low and, obviously, do not mean well. And who is to promote reforms?

The time of revolutionary romanticism has given way, as it always happens, to a disappointingly prosaic and down-to-earth routine. A look at the current situation in the country will show that political ambitions are locked in combat at all levels of the power structure, that skirmishes are in progress within the republics, and that all the leaders without exception are vigorously seeking international contacts and recognition.

Public attention is now concentrated on two Presidents – Yeltsin and Nazarbayev –



who have gone to Transcaucasia on a mediatory mission in an attempt to find some approaches, at least, to the solution of the Karabakh problem. The public has mixed feelings about this mission. On the one hand, there is no overlooking the fact that Russia's Supreme Soviet has already gathered for its first post-putsch session at the Soviet House to discuss the tense economic situation in the country and important personnel replacements in the sphere of executive power. Yeltsin left for Baku, then proceeded to Gyandzha and so on, and never turned up at the session. Although extremely popular, Russia's President came under critical fire in Azerbaijan as well as in Russia: after all, Russia has more than enough problems of its own, so, why should Yeltsin help others to put their house in order? It is only fair to ask this question, especially in a situation where the Vice-President is in Britain, the Prime Minister is changing over to the national level, the State Secretary is travelling along with the President, and the fort is held only by the acting Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, just back from Japan, whose Tokyo speech is regarded as controversial by the Russian deputies who are now in session with him in the chair.

Incidentally, Russia's active involvement in dealing with the Karabakh problem is traditional, although this involvement has brought it more troubles than laurels. Paradoxically, the Russian deputies who have repeatedly visited that hot spot to prevent bloodshed and to try and talk the conflicting sides into cooperation, whose presence has saved Armenian villages from assaults on several occasions –

Drawing by Igor Shein

these deputies have brought upon themselves universal dislike. Azerbaijan is convinced – as confirmed at the top official level – of Russia's pro-Armenian feelings. Armenia isn't grateful to them either, probably because Russian deputies have next to nothing to show for their efforts. Besides, many Armenian leaders are sure that Moscow supports Azerbaijan because the latter is allegedly not going to withdraw from the Union. As for the third force – the Interior Ministry troops and the army – they have always regarded Russian deputies as an eyesore.

A wave of political "earthquakes"

Yeltsin explains his special interest in the Karabakh problem by the fact that Russian servicement are involved in it, which argument is understandable and convincing. This is hardly the only reason, however. It is common knowledge that a political leader may reckon on popularity if he: (a) copes with economic problems and (b) achieves foreign policy successes, thus improving his country's image. The two leaders – one riding the crest of the post-putsch tidal wave, and the other barely keeping his former standing – have tackled a long-neglected problem and, be that as it may, great hopes are pinned on them. Any attempts to make headway towards the solution of that problem ought to be welcomed – after all, the centre has failed to remedy the situation for the past four years. This is a case of personal political ambitions serving a common cause.

On the very days when the Presidents were conducting negotiations in Baku, Armenia was preoccupied with its own independence – which could not but lend a strange colouring to what was taking place. Armenia announced that it was "going" at the very moment when its former "fellow-sufferers" – former Union Republics of the USSR – tried to solve the problem of Karabakh with its predominantly Armenian population. There is no denying the fact that the centre's failure to do anything about Karabakh riled Armenian leaders so much that they decided to declare their republic independent of the Union; still, one cannot fail to see that this has narrowed, if not completely eliminated, the scope of Armenia's capacity to influence the situation in Karabakh and to take part in dealing with the problem. The status of a "different state" binds it hand and foot.

Revolutionary romanticism has petered out in the Baltics, too – the struggle for independence has been crowned with victory. Now the three newly-independent Baltic states have a host of practical matters to attend to, among which the exchange of embassies is the most interesting and exciting one. The more troublesome and delicate problems include those of the Russian and Polish national minorities.

Tajikistan has found itself among unstable regions recently. The republic's leadership has delayed the dissolution of the Party until weeks after the putsch, which has brought mass protests from Party members and counter-protests from the opposition. This clash of protest may affect even the leadership itself. Incidentally, it was probably not for nothing that in most Republics of Central Asia the Communist Parties were not dissolved – the local Party leaders confined themselves to isolating their Republics' Communist Parties from the centre and from the CPSU. In Central Asia, Communist Parties remained at times stabilizing factors, guards against political forces and trends of an entirely different, non-democratic nature, rather than obstacles to progress, as was the case, say, in Russia. The developments in Georgia show that the power which has replaced the Communists may pursue a rather strange policy. On the whole the prediction that after the putsch a wave of political earthquakes will sweep across all the republics is coming true. In the Ukraine, the "earthquake" has been postponed until December, the month of the presidential election, and in the meantime Leonid Kravchuk has set out for Canada to score points in the foreign policy arena, which only goes to confirm, once again, that popularity presupposes successes in foreign policy.

The centre "out of business"?

The centre has been obviously and unambiguously pushed to the background – and not only on the Karabakh issue. Karabakh is just a graphic example of the centre of the home policy having shifted to the republican level. Russia and Kazakhstan have already emerged as the two political leaders of the future Soviet commonwealth of Nations." Russia's strengthening after the putsch was only a natural development. Although the deputies of the national parliament called on the Russian leaders to show tact, this particular case is not a matter of tact or tactlessness. Yeltsin's resolute moves and, at times, most persistent recommendations to the centre may, of course, be described as tactless, and Gorbachev may appear to be a slave to someone else's will and someone else's policy... Fortunately or unfortunately, however, this is inevitable – as the only suppressor of the putsch, the Russian leadership swept away all the state and Party structures which had backed the State of Emergency Committee – and all the people seem to have taken it for granted. But the resultant vacuum has to be filled by someone. So it is being filled with Russian "substance," with Russian structures – and not only because of pressure from Russia's President. Russian structures are the nearest, within arm's reach, and best adapted, owing to years of experience, to running a cumbersome economic and political system.

Ivan Silayev, who is most popular in Russia, has accepted the post of the head of the Inter-Republican Economic Committee – largely upon Yeltsin's insistence. Grigory Yavlinsky, ex-Deputy Premier of Russia, may rejoice – his programme has been adopted (I recall a tankman saying at the winners' meeting in front of the White House: "The revolution accomplishes the impossible...") General Kobets, Russia's Defence Minister, heads the Military Reform Committee at the Union level. One can clearly see that Russia's leaders are "usurping" national government bodies – and the Republics which want to stay in the Union are not exactly enthusiastic about that. This may be another reason the President of Kazakhstan is so active: judging by everything he is seeking a counterweight to Yeltsin. Yeltsin's increasing influence and prestige make the danger of Russia replacing the Union a real one.

Within Russia proper, apprehensions over the President's growing role are also great. The CPSU is gone, but no multiparty democracy has emerged in its place. It has turned out that the creation and strengthening of the parties take more than ousting the Communists from office. After the putsch, the Russian parliament is in confusion. Previously the situation there was determined by the struggle between two equally strong blocs – Democratic Russia and Communists of Russia. One of the blocs (you've certainly guessed which) is now demoralized, which upsets the balance. The parliament, however, ought to be of a magnitude comparable with that of the presidency. Considering that direct presidential rule has been introduced in some parts of Russia, one can understand popular anxiety over the prospect of Yeltsin, a popular and strong figure, filling the entire power structure and leaving no room in it either for the opposition, or for local authorities.

Marina Shakina

In the White House after the putsch

It may appear symbolic that the Russian Federation's Supreme Soviet gathered in its fourth session on September 19, exactly within a month of the putsch. Many expected (wishfully, perhaps) the Russian Federation to carry on its triumphant march toward democracy and hoped for the consolidation of society and stabilization of the economy especially desirable now.

As one listens to the people's elected representatives addressing the session (or even TV audiences) one cannot help feeling increasingly worried. Again, as before, one hears long monologues on themes remote from the subject under discussion; storms in a teacup begin now and again, but no cardinal decisions capable of clarifying our future are made. No real interest is shown in the sessions – the hall is half empty (or half-full, if you will). Why?

The discussion of the report "On the Socio-Economic Situation in the Russian Federation," delivered by Oleg Lobov, First Deputy Chairman of the Republic's Council of Ministers and Ivan Silayev's prospective successor, was most indicative. The speakers levelled a lot of criticism against the government (almost all of them dismissed it as incompetent), but as to constructive suggestions concerning ways out of the mess we are in... None!

Gennady Ariyevich

Incidentally, the report as such, too dull to do credit to the prospective premier, was lacking in vigour and cogency. Having dispassionately described the hardships of the Russian economy – continued production slump, spiralling inflation, the problems involved in purchasing farm produce – the First Deputy Premier as monotonously informed the audience that the collective farms were no longer and family farms were not yet to be reckoned on because the latter had only 0.5 percent of the total arable area in their use, and a third of the industrial enterprises fail to meet their contract commitments because of the disruption of traditional ties. Where is the way out of the situation? It lies, Oleg Lobov explained, in an expeditious changeover to a free-market economy, in the privatization of factories and plants (which, however, are deep in debt), in encouraging private enterprise.

There is no denying all this, but the speaker was not specific and did not even sound interested, as if he were an onlooker. It was not for nothing that in the lobby one could hear word combination "centralized control" (the term is outdated, but what it stands for probably isn't). For how long will this recapitulation last? In school, it is a method of consolidating knowledge, but in the economy marking time can only stabilize degradation, not progress. Isn't it time to act after six years of statements, when the very suppression of the putsch has swept many barriers away?

Boris Yeltsin was conspicuously absent from the session to the disappointment of many deputies who expected him to say something important. An illness prevented him from attending, the audience was told, rather unconvincingly. Many got the impression that his was a "diplomatic illness": Yeltsin either had nothing to say yet, or simply didn't feel like entering into conflict with those who demand a revision of the President's decrees and who even unfolded, in the foyer, a poster five metres long saying: "The President of Russia is the supreme guarantor of the lawless activity Popov and Co. engage in."

Unfortunately, the discussion of the conflict between Moscow's municipal authorities, the City Hall and the Moscow Council, resembled a street meeting from beginning to end – from the demand that it should be put on the agenda before the deputies who are on a hunger strike die to the resolution. It is more wide-ranging, of course, than the argument over who should be appointed the chief of Moscow's police, and by whom, but at the session it was reduced to just that. The stubbornness with which a group of deputies fought, at the risk of their lives, for the fulfillment of the Moscow Council's decision of January 26 on appointing General Komissarov to that post is certainly worthy of respect. I don't quite see why Gavriil Popov resisted that candidature: his idea was not only to make the law-enforcement agencies non-Party, but also to demilitarize them, and he wanted their chief in Moscow to be a civilian. By shunning a dialogue, the Mayor provided much food for thought and rumours.

General Komissarov has got the post and is already busy discharging his new duties, but somehow no one is rejoicing in the triumph of justice. One finds it hard to get rid of the impression that the prevailing mood is hysteria, that the whole confict is artificial. There are no serious grounds for it, and the present situation does not call for such a categorical sacrificiality. Only the enemies of the victorious democrats can delight in such quarrels between them.

Sick and tired of endless verbiage, people are waiting for dramatic changes...

Various "secrets of the Madrid royal court" in the White House hardly improve their public image, either. Now a respectable, usually even-tempered statesman suddenly bursts into an angry philippic, without any apparent reason, against a well-known economist (and abroad, of all places, which triggered all kinds of idle talk); now a popular Chairman of the Council of Ministers resigns – then changes his mind – then resigns after all... The appointment of Ivan Silayev to the post of the head of the Inter-Republican Economic Committee is a clever move, no doubt. Except that the appointment was made in a way reminiscent of the good old times before glasnost. Fantastic rumours are circulating about the causes of that: Silayev himself says one thing, his public relations service – something entirely different, and his aide simply hangs up on inquisitive journalists. So what is the fourth power, the press, supposed to do under the circumstances?

Incidentally, there appeared in the new bodies of executive power many press attaches "attached" to various, not only the top, executives. We ought to be happy about that: in any normal country these public relations men deem it their duty to satisfy the press' appetite, so as to project a bright image of their respective departments, of course. Our attaches discharge an altogether different function: they go all out to protect their chiefs from importunate pressmen. In any case, they give preference to foreign newsmen (to justify their foreign-sounding name, perhaps?) or to individual reporters representing wealthy weeklies whose exclusive stories suggest that the attaches' own appetites are not bad, either.

In a word, the hopes aroused in people after the brilliant victory over the putschists, who unwittingly removed many KGB and Central Committee barriers in the way of democracy, may be dashed unless the new authorities differ, in substance and in form, in what they do and in what they say, from the smug partocracy of old...

Gorbachev – in profile and en face

The tactic of manoeuvring and compromise

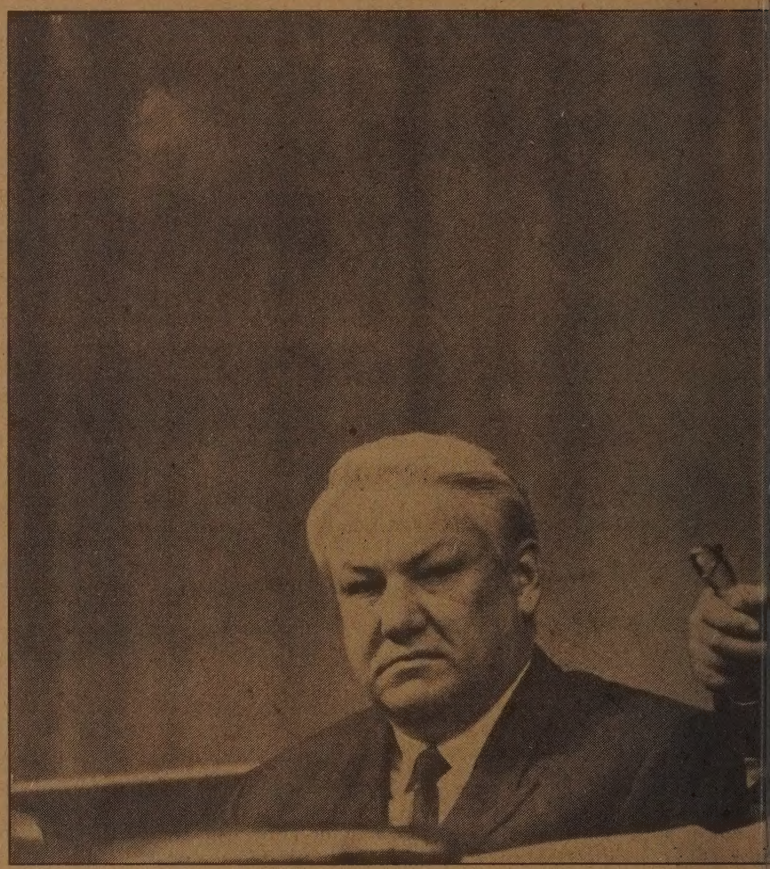
Alexei Pankin

Today everyone seems to reproach Gorbachev with indecision and a poor selection of candidates for high posts, and to make all kinds of demands on him. There is apparently good reason for that. Russia rescued Gorbachev from danger, and now he has to return the favor. Is it so evident, though? In my opinion, it can be stated that Gorbachev's contribution to the saving of democracy at a crucial moment equals, to say the least, the contribution made by Yeltsin.

As a matter of fact, Gorbachev and the democrats had a common opponent and a common problem during the years of *perestroika*. The opponent was the military-repressive-party bureaucracy, a terrible monster which has taken society, the economy and policy under its control and will stop at nothing in order to perpetuate itself. The problem was the lack of workable ideas and strength for crushing this opponent. In these circumstances they behaved in different ways. Democrats teased the beast and continued to wound it, while Gorbachev tried to allow the beast to die its natural death, seeing to it that during its convulsions it would not kill more people than is inevitable in such cases.

I think that in fighting against the bureaucracy many democrats did not behave properly, constantly making the greatest policy mistake. They helped to unite the vairous groups of opponents, though there were enough contradictions between them. In the last months before the August events democrats could pay the bureaucracy off, as the British have done in the course of their history. However, they continued to drive the wounded beast into a corner.

Furthermore, it is difficult to escape the impression that, in spite of the democrats' talk about the danger of a military coup and clear signs in the last year that something was about to happen, they did not take the danger very seriously.

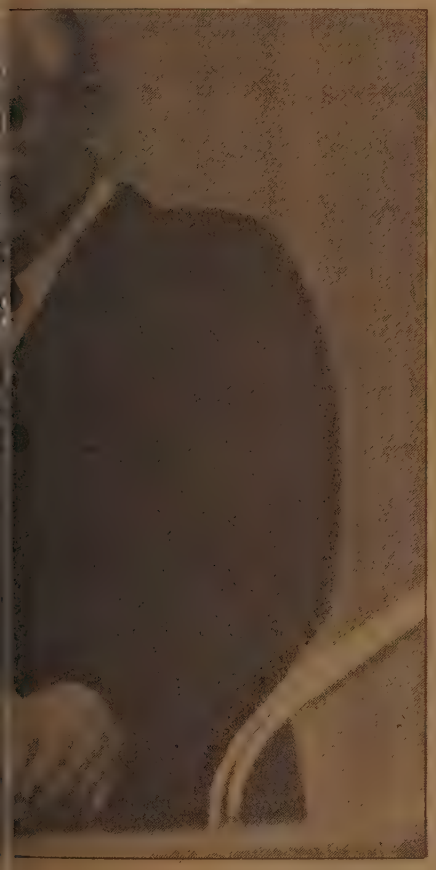


Perhaps we still do not understand Gorbachev's innate wisdom. Instead of teasing a wounded beast – the party-bureaucratic system – he let things go their own way

In a way the situation is reminiscent of 1941, when there were many signs of an imminent war, but the invasion proved unexpected and the country was not prepared for it. But the Russian leaders deserve praise nevertheless. Just as 50 years ago, they were able to organize effective defense of the territory under their control and go on the offensive. The main thing is that, as in the war against Nazi Germany, the leader of the nation was saved by the valour and devotion of the people.

There is, however, an essential distinction between the two events. In 1941 our people were faced with a streamlined war machine of the Third Reich and in August 1991 with the demoralized and dislocated system headed by a group of wretched people who proved unable to do even the most elementary things.

It is in this that I see Gorbachev's salvation mission. At no stage of *perestroika* did he have enough strength for a decisive battle against the bureaucracy and therefore, like Kutuzov, as Leo Tolstoy saw him in his novel *War and Peace*, he procrastinated, trapped the opponent into further action, and let things go their own way. Gorbachev manoeuvred, compromised, split the opposing forces, won tactical victories



and made tactical concessions.

The burden which befell him became incredibly hard during the past year. It was the pressure exerted by the bureaucratic upper crust who were stung by the democrats more and more painfully, and this pressure increased considerably. The liberals also turned away from him. To all appearances, the President no longer controlled the party, the army, the KGB, the interior ministry, and the situation in the country. He felt nervous and made many mistakes.

Nevertheless, when matters came to a head Gorbachev became the master of the situation in an incomprehensible way. All of a sudden the raging party leadership would slavishly obey his commands and almost unanimously vote for the leader hated by it. Hated by the democrats and despised by the army, Yazov kept his post of defence minister, though more energetic generals popular in the army laid claim to the post. The Lithuanian Parliament was never faken. During the February demonstration in Moscow, when it seemed that tanks would be used against the crowd, a decision was finally made to send army trucks which blocked the streets. As time passed, the system disintegrated and the democrats were given ever more respites for the mustering of their forces.

When, nevertheless, the bureaucratic upper crust decided to act while the democrats had not mustered enough strength to rule out the possibility of a coup in principle, the real triumph of Gorbachev's line became clearly evident. In its last crucial moment the military-bureaucratic monster, which had crushed several countries and shed oceans of blood, brought forth not even a mouse, but a little cockroach. This should be remembered today, at the height of rejoicing over the victory of democracy. Otherwise, the sniffing bon vivant Yanayev might become an epic villain.

It was of course a terribly unpleasant path, humiliating for the self-respect of the people who paid a high price for it. It seems, however, that with the condition of society inherited by Gorbachev in 1985, the dramatic conflicts latent in it, the lack of knowledge about society and almost general incompetence, the rudimentary social structure, total poverty and degradation and the absurd economic system, this path was far more painless and in the end safer for us and the world than any other, more direct path.

I do not think that the President followed this path consciously, that it was a clearly realized strategy. Most likely he was driven by the interests of his own political survival. One can only wonder at the happy coincidence, the fact that in the given situation the country had a man with the qualities Gorbachev has at its helm.

Once this "irresolute," "constantly hesitating" President who was losing his popularity ceased to be the first man in the state, the uncontrolled processes of disintegration intensified right away and republics began to lay claims to each other's land in earnest. Coul the appearance of centripetal tendencies today be connected with the fact that Gorbachev managed to survive this time, too, while his ability to manoeuvre and compromise proved necessary for all in this turbulent period?

President Lear

Stefan Heym,
German writer

Once Gorbachev said: "Life punishes those who are late." He had in mind another person. But perhaps he also spoke about himself

Usually one pays money to see a good Shakespeare play. But a short while ago we had an opportunity to see a play gratis, and right in our homes. It was a performance with the thunder of a battle, with heroes and buffoons, and it kept us in suspense until the very end, if the performance is over indeed.

In *King Lear* (Act I, Scene 4) one of the knights says to the king: "My lord, I know not what the matter is; but, to my judgement, your higness is not entertained with that ceremonious affection as you were wont; there's a great abatement of kindness appears as well in the general dependants as in the duke himself also and your daughter." The king replies to this: "Thou but rememberest me of mine own conception: I have perceived a most faint neglect of late; which I have rather blamed as mine own jealous curiosity than as a very presence and purpose of unkindness: I will look further into't."

It appears, however, that King Lear was too late. He had divided his kingdom between his daughters Goneril and Regan, who hypocritically vowed fidelity to their father and love for him. The third, youngest daughter, Cordelia, did not pander to her father's whims and he exiled her. The tragedy picks

up speed, and the fool tells his king: "He's mad that trusts in the tameness of a wolf, a horse's health, a boy's love, or a whore's oath."

In one way or another – on the TV screen or in a newspaper – all of us saw the bunch of putschists who ruled in Moscow for three days. Take anyone of them – Yanayev, Pugo or Yazov. No director shooting a gangster film would dare choose for the roles of mafiosi actors with such countenances as these men have for fear of being reproached with a lack of a sense of proportion. At a press conference held by Gorbachev on his return from captivity, a bearded gentleman asked the President how it came about that he himself nominated these persons for top posts. It is written on their foreheads that they are inveterate scoundrels, he added. This question put the President in an embarrassing situation.

Finally Gorbachev replied that he had made a mistake in choosing some of them, but did not explain why. During his 72 hours in isolation in the Crimea he probably thought about more topical issues than the analysis of his rash actions, as Lear did with the help of his fool.

The reasons are clearly evident, however. The same reasons explain Gorbachev's indecisive and uncertain policy: two steps forward and one step back, a reform today and fear of it tomorrow.

Young Gorbachev was taught in a party school that the history of all societies is one of the struggle of classes. During the sleepless nights in the Crimea in August 1991 the President probably asked himself what class rose in despair to the struggle against him. It was evidently his own class – the bureaucratic officialdom, top economic executives, army generals and top officials and full-time party functionaries to whom he himself belonged for a long time.

He again could ask himself whether they made up a class. A distinguishing feature of a class, young Gorbachev was taught in a party cadre school, is its relation to property. Capitalists own the means of production and workers have only their hands. A bureaucratic official – and Gorbachev learned this from his own experience – has nothing but buttocks with which he fills his chair. Removed from his post, he becomes as poor a man as he was at the beginning of his career.

So a chair is the main thing. The presence of a chair is a distinguishing feature of the bureaucracy. It is its property. Though a chair costs only several rubles, it has proved more valuable than share holding or a bank account, land or real estate or a car. That is why bureaucrats have fought for their chairs with might and main, resorting to all kinds of ruses and perfidy. The possession of a chair means power. A man who possessed a chair has everything which makes life comfortable: a country house and a car, fashionable goods from France and leather articles from Britain, electronic wares from Japan and, what is especially important, subordinates. It is clear therefore that this power has no foundation, that it is possession without the object of possession, and they could exist as long as the bureaucrats were consolidated.

When the uppper crust chose the youngest (Gorbachev) from their midst (because older statesmen died too soon in their opinion), their representatives in the party's Politbureau and other higher bodies did not suspect that he would take the bit between his teeth so soon, would like to run away from them. Therefore they first shouted "hey" and then "stop." After that they began to threaten him and made vague hints about the betrayal of their cause. However, Gorbachev learned well what he was taught in a party cadre school. Citing the pundits of Marxism, his teacher asserted that the class which hinders the progress of the productive forces must give way to another class.

The bureaucratic officialdom became such a class which, like the fathers of the Church, always followed one and the same canon and moved at the same pace. It was a class which did not produce anything, a burden on the people. Having realized that, Gorbachev saw that things could not last any longer as they did before, that such a development would end in a complete disaster for everyone. However, he was not strong enough to kick his class the way it deserved. Perhaps he would not have kicked it even if he had had enough strength.

And then Gorbachev devised *perestroika* in the hope that high-placed officials would reform in the course of the general process if he patiently brought home to them that *perestroika* was necessary and exerted some pressure on them with the help of *glasnost*. Later they would see, Gorbachev thought, that he launched *perestroika* in their own interests, in the interests of the state and the party.

It is for this reason, hoping for their reformation, that Gorbachev made Yanayev and others his close associates. Later, these men presented an ultimatum to him, equivalent to his political suicide, and placed guards at his doors so that he could not slip away from them. Gorbachev and his close associates were born in the same cradle, so to speak. They recognized each other by their common smell, familiar only to them. An experienced functionary, he thought that traitors did not give off such a smell.

Goneril and Regan were aristocrats, just like their father Lear. The king was stung most of all by the fact that his daughters reduced his suite from 100 knights to 50, from 50 to 25, and then to zero. Only the fool and Kent, dressed as an ordinary man, remained with him. Unlike their father, Goneril and Regan knew the nature of power and showed him what hapens to a man who, coming to believe in human kindness, virtually betrays his class by giving power away to others.

This is how the putschists acted, too. They had been frightened since the day Gorbachev drove them into a corner with his policy of *glasnost*. They experienced fear and deep, instinctive hostility towards everything which, though looking similar, was different from what they were accustomed to. If the putschists had not feared Gorbachev they could, perhaps, have acted tougher upon flying to the Crimea. One of them could have drawn his pistol and said: "We give you 30 seconds to sign the statement of resignation." This could indeed have happened.

But there were no men like Stalin or Dzerzhinsky among the putschists. All of them were second-rate people with guilty consciences.

Towards the end of the play *King Lear*, the best intentions of the king lead to an opposite result. Lear loses his reason. The scene of action is Britain, not the Crimea.

"Lear. They flatter'd me like a dog... To say 'ay' and 'no' to everything I said. 'Ay' and 'no' too was no good divinity. When the rain came to wet me once and the wind to make me chatter, when the thunder wound not peace at my bidding, there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out...

"Hark, in thine ear: change places; and, handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief? Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a begger?.. And the creature run from the cur? There thou mightst behold the great image of authority; a dog's obey'd in office... No rescue? What! A prisoner? I am even the natural fool of fortune. Use me well; you shall have ransom. Let me have surgeons; I am cut to the brains."

It seems to me that Gorbachev twice came close to the line which Lear crossed. This could be seen from the confusion which every doctor could notice in Gorbachev's eyes during his televised press conference. It happened first when the President described how his guards became his warders and, then, when he spoke about social justice and the socialist choice and added that, in spite of what had happened, they meant a lot for him. Gorbachev began to guess at the time that his words, even sincere and correct, could no longer convince anyone.

How lonely and humiliated Gorbachev should have felt when his saviour Yeltsin – at a time when the President was on the rostrum – signed a decree banning the party. Gorbachev was at that time still General Secretary of the party, and had just spoke in its defence, though he knew that the party sheepishly kept silent during the three days of the putsch. It kept silent when the Regans and Gonerils, who are of one bone and one flesh with him, deprived him of the last remnants of his power in a predatory way. If Gorbachev did not want to die as a political figure it only remained for him to rely on other people. He never was of a high opinion of these people and quite probably one fine day they would also declare him incapable of holding his office, as his close associates had just tried to do. Gorbachev already knew, and perhaps he knew it even earlier, that the Communist Party, whatever heroic deeds it accomplished in the past, was never able and did not intend to build the socialism in which he still believed.

Gorbachev once said: "Life punishes those who are late." He had in mind another person. But perhaps he also spoke about himself. In any case, whatever happens to Gorbachev in the future, he is an historic figure and therefore holds interest for poets.

What about the people who in Shakespeare's plays are symbolized by a wise fool? The people whom the putschists did not take into account and who, if we think carefully, did not act in the Marxist way, that is, did not prefer food to morals. On the contrary, they rose in defence of freedom as they did in 1917 and later, during the war against Nazi Germany.

There is every reason to think that the people will yet say something quite unexpected, something which will not be pleasant to hear for us and for those who loudly applaud them today.

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Dangerous marathon in Tbilisi

Several months after the presidential elections, Georgia has become an arena of an acute political conflict which may grow into a war...

To comply with the putschists' demands, the Georgian President abolished the National Guards and turned it over to the OMON riot troops so dear to the Reds' hearts. The Guards' commander Kitovani was deposed, the order was signed post factum. The national guardsmen who disobeyed the order left Tbilisi for the mountains. Gamsakhurdia called upon the Georgian population to maintain discipline and remain at their workplaces and began to wait for future developments. On the third day he prudently supported the victorious side. The paper *Komsomolskaya Pravda,* which had dropped a few words about that matter, disappeared from newspaper booths.

The ranks of opposition reinforced...

Rumours about the Georgian President's personal involvement with the putsch began spreading in Tbilisi. On Monday September 2 the National Democratic Party which was resuming weekly information rallies near the Cinema House in Tbilisi after summer vacation was going to divulge documents proving the existence of a plot. Those gathered were met by OMON troopers who immediately used "special means" – police clubs and shields. The participants of the rally began stoning the attackers. Shooting was the answer.

Everybody thought that blank cartridges were being used, and so it was on the whole. But suddenly people began falling down.

Several people were wounded. One of them, a guardsman, narrowly escaped death. Since that moment rallies have continued uninterruptedly. A few days later the National Guards returned to the city. The guardsmen declared that Zviad Gamsakhurdia would be held liable for all he had done if blood were shed again.

Trying to conceal the truth about the dispersal of the rally, the president and the government accused the opposition of starting the shooting, but four days later they were forced to state that... there were provocateurs and hidden "Kremlin's agents" among the OMON personnel. But the tide of indignation was impossible to stem. The number of opposition sympathizers is growing and the events are becoming increasingly critical.

The barricaded Tbilisi streets are filled by crowds chanting, "Dismiss the President," "Ceausescu." What was the balance of political forces at that moment?

The power was (and still is) in the hands of the bloc The Round Table – Free Georgia which was formed even before the October elections of 1990. None of the parties represented in the Supreme Soviet has ever been sufficiently numerous, probably, with the exception of the Society of St. Ilijah the Pious. So it can be unmistakably asserted that, although Gamsakhurdia is the leader of the two most influential organizations represented in the bloc – The Helsinki Alliance and the Society of St. Ilijah the Pious, it isn't "parties" (in Georgia any political association is called a party) that secure his success, but the president's personal popularity among his compatriots, politicized and non-politicized alike.

The two above-mentioned parties form the centre around which other parties unite – Traditionalists, the Merab Kostava Society, et alia.

At present this structure is falling apart – early in September some members of the Society of St. Ilijah the Pious deserted the ranks of the president's followers and joined the opposition.

Many high-ranking figures from the president's immediate milieu are now found among the opposition. They include T.Sigua, former premier who resigned the day before the putsch and chairman of the Rustaveli Society – once one of the most numerous and popular organizations which, as rumour has it, was wrecked by him to please the president. They

"O Lord, help us reconcile the conflicting sides..."

National Guards outside the Government House

include also former foreign minister G.Khoshtaria, member of the "Helsinki Alliance" and Gamsakhurdia's recent enthusiastic admirer who took an active part in baiting dissident philosopher Merab Mamardashvili. (Many Georgians still remember G.Khoshtaria's article "Fortresses are taken from inside." As is easily guessed from the title, it treats the Georgian president's favourite topic – "the fifth column.") He had been deposed the day before Sigua resigned. One can't say that Khoshtaria suffered for being an oppositionist – the exact opposite is true: he became one after he had suffered. Today one of the most ardent of Gamsakhurdia's opponents is Nodar Natadze, chairman of the Popular Front which, though it unites quite a lot of people, has dragged out the most miserable existence under the new regime. Unlike his two present allies who have never dared to utter a word at variance with the people's favourite, Natadze sharply criticized Gamsakhurdia at sessions of the Supreme Soviet for his inconsistency trying to be more like the Pope than the Pope himself, and so earned himself a reputation as an oppositionist.

Another two of the most ardent followers of the leader defected to the "insurgents'" side.– V.Adamia, leader of the militarized organization White George and the gallant Kitovani already known to the reader. It was precisely these two who once brought Zviad to power.

However, the president's principle opponents are not the defectors, but his old enemy Chanturia and the National Democratic Party which supports him. And if one remembers that all parties, both belonging to the National Congress and not, form a united front with it, it's not difficult to imagine how difficult a situation the President finds himself in, especially since the intelligentsia's intentions are very grave and universities are seething – the students haven't forgiven Gamsakhurdia for abolishing self-government of the Tbilisi University which they had achieved under communist rule.

If the President retains power...

Nobody is able at present to say what the future course of events will be, yet even today one can forsee the consequences of taking one of these courses.

If Zviad Gamsakhurdia retains absolute power it will entail immediately crushing the opposition. Repressive measures will be the lot of its radical part – leaders of the National Democratic Party, the Ilya Chavchavadze Society, the Party of Georgia's National Independence, and separate radically-minded representatives of the intelligentsia will be immediately arrested. The headquarters of the National Congress and other opposition organizations will be raided. The moderate opposition which up to this day has participated in the proceedings of the Supreme Soviet and the president's former allies who changed colours after the September 2 events will lose authority among a population which partly will not forgive them their betrayal of the "beloved leader" and partly would prefer to support "the genuine opposition," "genuine fighters against the dictatorship who languish in prison." Thus, even today Jaba Ioseliani enjoys the general support of the intelligentsia and other oppositionally-minded sections of Georgian society. Yet many of his present followers forget that both Ioseliani and Gamsakhurdia were at the cradle of Mhedrioni as they forget about numerous criminal episodes associated with this organization.

These changes will bring about further polarization of society, and radicalization of political groups and, as a result, further growth of the regime's oppressiveness. By retaining firm control over the mass media and limiting the flow of information from outside (at present the president constantly makes attempts of that kind in regard to the central press and TV) Zviad Gamsakhurdia

will retain support of the majority of the poorly informed and little politicized population and thus will finally lose the support of the educated part of the population. The inevitable consequence of this course of events will be the appearance of terrorist groups. It remains for us only to guess if this movement will reach the range of that of the Socialist-Revolutionaries or if it will be able to encompass only a small part of the general liberation movement.

Uniting the Caucasus again?

The fact that the main bulk of the population still supports Zviad Gamsakhurdia is explained first of all by the economic situation in the republic and the president's successful foreign policy. While no achievements are expected in the economic sphere – not to mention the possibility granted to the population now when state power is being challenged, to buy 200 gr. of butter; and even that only in September – the situation in the domain of foreign policy is favourable for the government. Probably the only aspiration uniting all Georgians – the dream of independence – became real after the August events in Moscow. The beginning of the disintegration of the old empire and growth of Russia's role in forming a new confederation of states around itself, even if it doesn't guarantee the possibility of a quick and free secession of Georgia from the Union, will at least facilitate a "prolonged and victorious struggle for Mother Georgia's independence." Russia's priority policy in the Caucasus will, in all probability, be liquidation of ethnic conflicts on the northern slope of the Caucasian ridge.

At present it is possible to single out two probable knots of controversy between Russia and Georgia. The first, and already real, is connected with Zviad Gamsakhurdia's support of some national movements in the Northern Caucasus – of the Ingushes, for instance. This is especially true because the idea of Georgia's exclusive ability to unite the Caucasus is very popular in that republic. Against the backdrop of the Ossetians' continuing exodus from Southern Ossetia, this ideology can't avoid arousing the concern of Russian authorities. On the other hand, there is appearing, although still hypothetically, the second knot of controversy which has to do with Russia's outlet to the Black Sea, including the question of the Black Sea Fleet bases, since as early as 1988 the population of the Abkhaz Republic has been attempting to pass into the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation. Abkhazian separatism combined with the activities of certain "unifiers of Russian lands" may become the reason for another conflict between Georgians and Abkhazians. That such developments are possible is evidenced by the recent letter of three committees of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet suggesting rather resolutely that Georgia accept a mission of observers from the USSR and the Russian Federation and impose a state of emergency in areas of conflict. The latter is explained by the fact that the units of the USSR Ministry of the Interior can operate freely only under the state of emergency.

If the president of Georgia manages to gain the support and recognition of Western countries his position will be strengthened considerably, all the more so as the opposition criticized him for indecision as early as a year ago and demanded immediate recognition of the fact of occupation of Georgia and, consequently, its immediate liberation. Attainment of full independence by the republic will promote the present leader to the rank of a national hero and will make him impervious to criticism from "the Kremlin's agents" who always block the way.

All this only pushes Georgia towards isolationism, and even possibilities of preserving settled economic relations profitable for the republic, including that of signing a treaty concerning common economic space, fall victim to the current propaganda campaign. The economic slump coupled with political instability deprives the government of a chance to implement overdue reforms. The administrative system of controlling the economy is still there; during the last year its private sector has suffered heavy losses, and state and collective farms remain as before. All this leads to the exacerbation of the crisis. This vicious circle threatens with new bursts of dissatisfaction and for that reason preservation of the regime in its existing form will inevitably bring about new social cataclisms in the future.

Is there an alternative to Gamsakhurdism?

It would seem that the opposition's coming to power must bring about drastic changes, but certain points leave room for doubts. Liquidation of Zviad Gamsakhurdia's regime will give moral satisfaction to many among those who can't forget his betrayal in the 1970s, or provocations against the non-Georgian peoples of the republic, or the insults showered by him and the press obedient to him – to all those who won't forgive him moral degradation of the Georgian people whom he is now pushing to the brink of a civil war.

However, the president of Georgia may be completely ousted from political life only by means of non-constitutional methods. In order to do it by constitutional means it is necessary to prove the fact that he is a traitor to Georgia, to secure the approval by three fourths of the Supreme Soviet where Gamsakhurdia still enjoys the support of the overwhelming majority, or to make amendments to the Constitution: presidentship in the republic or at least reduce it to a purely representative status for which only two thirds of the votes are required. Besides, to retain the power, the opposition will have not only to replace the presidential republican system by a parliamentary one and dismiss the Supreme Soviet, but to create also a transitional government, since the president still enjoys the support of the majority of population, especially in provincial areas, and will win if elections are held immediately. It will take time to shatter the image of "the leader of the Georgian people," therefore the opposition must try to postpone the elections, possibly, by means of changes in the electoral system. As for the composition of the transitional government, it must be determined by a group of people who are now heading the opposition, not one of whose representatives can hope now for personal leadership. T.Sigua who still headed Gamsakhurdia's Cabinet of Ministers in August, is the one most often referred to as a potential chairman of the coalition government. An economist and a good administrator, he managed not to lose his authority during the period of his joint work with Gamsakhurdia. He didn't sling mud at dissidents nor has he ever tried to be half a pace ahead of the president.

If the opposition wins, the power will be concentrated practically in the hands of three persons – Chanturia, chairman of the largest and most active opposition party, and the two "men with a rifle" – Adamia, the leader of the White George detachments, one time Gamsakhurdia's right hand, and Kitovani, who was deposed on the first day of the putsch and, having taken offence at the president, left and brought with him 10,000 fighters of the National Guards. Ioseliani's release from custody and subsequent quick revival of Mhedrioni, as well as other internal changes, will upset the delicate balance in the triumvirate.

No one is able to make a forecast of Georgia's future, but it is evident that the current situation best suits the moderate opposition. Their leaders made use of the opportunity to appeal to their people and began the struggle for the awakening of the Georgian nation and its liberation from totalitarianism. More and more people who have recently thought in terms of a "newspeak" work out their own opinion. God help them.

Alexander Braun,
Semyon Katz

Freedom comes naked...

Tatiana Ivanova

Why weren't three much-coveted decrees – on the freedom of property ownership, on freedom of trade and on freedom of private enterprise – issued on the day following the victory over the putschists?

A month has already elapsed since that terrible day, August 19. Much has already been written about our victory, and still more is coming. Comments based on early impressions are both good and bad. Good, because they contain the details which are certain to be obliterated by time, convey the mood which in itself is of historical interest because our mood, our frame of mind then was, of course, unique, unprecedented and inimitable. Those three days certainly marked a landmark in our history.

At the same time, comments written right "in the wake" of events are bad because nervous strain leads us to inadequate conclusions in the heat of the moment. Examples abound. The most vivid of all, perhaps, are journalists' references to the conspirators as pitiful incompetents, goofs, who could not even organize a coup properly... I file all the articles about the coup which appear in our periodicals. As I systematize information about those three days in August, I arrive at the conclusion that everything was organized quite expertly. All the levers were pulled, and all the right buttons were pressed. The machine misfired, but that is a different question. The problem now is to prevent a new machine from running idle...

I am not speaking about the USSR. Such a state has long been nonexistent, although the documentary evidence of its nonexistence appeared only after the putsch. The republics are sovereign, and the problems of Georgia ought to mean more to the citizens of Russia than the problems of Bangladesh – but not much more than, say, the problems of Poland... I am speaking about Russia, about my own country. Russia's wheels are running idle, the machine of Russia does not move, that is the trouble.

What does Russia's capital look like today? Let me show you around the neighbourhood where I live.

The sight of the dark and deserted streets always gives me the creeps – and this within a stone's throw of the Television Centre, the famous Cosmos Hotel and the exhibition of the former achievements of the former national economy. One would expect this part of the city to be aglitter with lights, busy with shoppers, to be a babel of voices, a beehive of traffic, a kaleidoscope of colour... Well, it is none of these things...

Our food stores are not merely shabby, they are ugly, dirty, reeking of rotten fish, and their shelves are bare. If anything at all is on sale, people queue up for it. Our stores are now half their size of a year ago. The locked sections are said to be closed for repairs although no one is repairing anything there.

There used to be a large flea market, called Rizhsky, in my neighbourhood where one could buy anything – pain-killers, sweets, blanket slips, flatirons. The market has been closed by now. The items I have just mentioned are no longer available anywhere for love or money. Right there, in the Rizhsky market, there used to be a secondhand store that sold things cheap. Although a small one, it was of help to many. Now it is no more. Another secondhand store, the one on Prospekt Mira, has pushed its prices up beyond the ordinary shoppers' reach. Pie, candy and pastry peddlars have been ordered off the streets. No one fries shishkebab anywhere anymore.

One gets the impression that all trade is coming to a halt. Even a bookstore which used to sell pencils as a sideline no longer does so. Now the nearest place where I can buy a pencil or, say, a comb is an hour's trolleybus and metro ride from my place.

Our street-corner newsstands are open for two hours a day. They sell nothing but newspapers. A large bakery with its staff of three salesgirls and two cashiers, all bored to death, sells two kinds of bread. At the post office, one part-time clerk reports for duty twice a month to pay out pensions.

How is one to survive in such a city?

Why weren't three much-coveted decrees – on the freedom of property ownership, on freedom of trade and on freedom of private enterprise – issued on the day following the victory over the putschists? Those who presume that there are decrees more important than the ones I have mentioned might as well presume that there are things more important than normal human life. As I waited in an endless line for some barely edible food in my stinking, empty and unfriendly food store one day, I opened a newspaper to while away the time and learned that Russia's Council of Ministers was moving to Staraya Ploshchad, the City Hall – to the former CMEA building, the Moscow City Soviet – to the former Lenin Museum, and that the former Moscow Soviet building will now house the prefecture. "If anything happens," I asked myself, "where are we to set up barricades? On August 19 we had only two places to defend: the Moscow City Soviet and the White House."

I have no misgivings at all about the honesty, good intentions and even competence of Russia's and Moscow's authorities. But what about those who do have such misgivings?

They say that freedom comes naked. This has turned out to be true. Wherever you look, you see post-battle devastation. Do you think the battle lasted for 72 hours? Oh no. It lasted for 70-odd years. This land is drenched with blood. There are millions of dead behind each, victim of that fatal August night. In order to understand why I spend hours queuing for potatoes today, you should peruse all the party resolutions on collectivization and understand the principles underlying the operation of the "machine" which did not run idle in the 1920s and the 1930s. This is an old and horrible mechanism. It can no longer be put into action, as evidenced by the events of a month ago. It looks, however, as though the machine has run over some of the more honest and intelligent of our top executives. Otherwise, when building a new machine after the glorious victory, they would have put their priorities in the right order...

Decide for yourself

We are accustomed to making our choice only at fateful moments, hoping that someone will carry out our choice

Poel Karp

Those dramatic three days revealed how ill-founded is one of the most tenacious illusions which seemed to have crumbled way back at the time of the first Russian revolution (ironically, the fate of the putsch was decided near the 1905 memorial). The faith in a kind-hearted ruler was lost once again. Although this time the troops were turned against the people not by the ruler or by men loyal to him but by usurpers, the limitations of a revolution from above became obvious. It turned out that no ruler can make what he does irreversible.

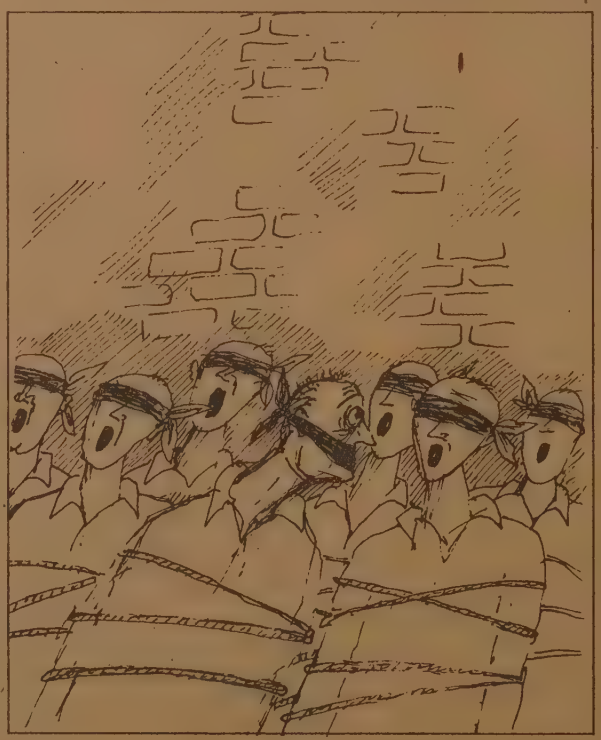
Who needs kind-hearted rulers?

A nation consists of individuals. The fate of a nation depends on the choice everyone makes: not only at the polls, but continuously. No one can tell in advance whether his choice is right: time alone will distinguish revelations from delusions. Freedom means the right of choice without which a nation cannot adapt itself to reality, maintain a high enough standard of living, or even preserve its distinctive national character.

Pavlov, Yanayev and others tried to return the country to the state of emergency it had been in for seventy-odd years. After all, a state of emergency consists of taking freedom of choice away from the people. It has been inculcated in our citizens over the years that the bosses know better what's right for them, that the whole truth is found in *Pravda*, and what *Pravda* says is true (although all the citizens know, in their heart of hearts, that it's not).

It was not for nothing that another Party paper, *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, carried "A Word to the People" which openly called for a coup and which was openly signed by the would-be conspirators Tizyakov, Varennikov, Starodubtsev. The latter, the chief chairman of collective farms, knew full well that the collective farms' prosperity is based on the fact that the rest of the peasants do not have a choice between working on a collective farm and farming on their own. Even private farming, now permitted by new laws, is, as a matter of fact, wholly dependent on collective or state farms. Had people been offered a real option – be it in agriculture, industry, science or culture – the system of values would have changed at once. This is why men like Starodubtsev will fight tooth and nail for a monopoly in the military-industrial complex and in any other sphere of activity, for a system under which the good things in life are not earned, but are distributed according to merits known only to the bosses. Hence the yearning for a leader who would be strict but fair.

The past seventy years have shown, however, that no state of emergency and no violence can, in the age of the computer, feed and clothe the people, ensure order and security. A state of emergency is introduced in order to protect extraordinary privileges. Those who lack such privileges gain nothing from a state of emergency. Valentin Pavlov, who had all but quadrupled the prices, gave a solemn oath to lower them and to raise wages after the putsch. Well, he had a reputation for being a liar, in the first place; besides, even if he had lived up to his promise, that would have brought us nothing except runaway inflation. And a robbed man has no choice. He is well contented with the handouts he gets, and submissive. That was why we were robbed.



Drawing by Victor Bogorad

From the Central Committee to the State of Emergency Committee

It is not for nothing that a state of emergency begins with banning certain news-

papers. The monopoly rulers of the huge country's economy need no differences of opinion; they prefer spreeches by Prokhanov Bondarev, or Kurginian which sound like music to them.

Why did men who already held all the supreme posts in the country, except the presidency, try to usurp power? They did that in order to monopolize decision making, in order to take the right of choice away from the people lest the latter should topple the predatory rulers by a simple majority vote.

It is hard to believe that Gorbachev, for all his remarkable tactical flair, is so blind as to appoint wrong men to all the high posts without exception (although, according to him, he now regrets this). Hadn't he been shrewd enough earlier to entrust key executive posts to outstanding statesmen like Yakovlev, Shevardnadze and Yeltsin? However, outstanding statesmen could not be "mere cat's paws," as ex-Deputy Premier Shcherbakov called himself. They opposed their ideas to those of the President, while nonentities, who put their tails between their legs when shouted at, opposed constructive ideas with violence, blocking telephone conversations and banning the newspapers.

In our press, Yanayev and company have been dubbed "a handful of conspirators." This is wrong. Had they been just a handful, the Secretariat of the CPSU Central Committee would hardly have called upon the Communists to give the State of Emergency Committee full cooperation. The Secretariat could not waive its habitual monopoly on the truth, its sacred Communist right to make decisions for others.

Even assuming that people may, after all, opt for socialism if it appeals to them, our own people never did so: they followed the Bolsheviks in 1917 only because the latter had promised to solve agrarian and ethnic problems (still awaiting their solution).

The tragedy of the 1917 revolution lay not in its banner being socialism (it was Socialists, beginning with Plekhanov and Martov, who levelled the sharpest criticism against the Bolsheviks), but in the CPSU being unable, due to its very organization known as democratic centralism, to give its members and people in general a chance to make their own individual choice. Gorbachev realized what the country was heading for and departed, even though hesitantly, from the habitual practice of making arbitrary decisions. This not only infuriated Nina Andreyeva and Victor Tyulkin, but brought forth the Central Committee Secretariat's call to support the State of Emergency Committee – and in fact, the very formation of that Committee, which might otherwise have been set up legally.

The unity of wolves and lambs

While discussing a new and not unappealing programme, the Party, at the same time alienated both Alexander Yakovlev and Alexander Rutskoi. This made the CPSU's position much clearer than the words about tolerance and diversity of views. Only the Party leaders, not millions of rank-and-file Communists, are blamed for that. But hasn't joining the CPSU always meant entrusting all the decision making to its leaders for the rest of each rank-and-file member's life? There have always been differences of opinion and behaviour which, however, were overcome by Communist obedience, by the rank-and-file members of the Stalin-fostered party voluntarily renouncing their private opinions. That was exactly what enabled the Party leadership to ignore morals and the law.

Rank-and-file Communists, like the CPSU leaders, left their General Secretary to fend for himself. They used to voice their indignation over the arrests of Latin American Communist Party leaders, but this time not even a handful of them took to the streets to demonstrate for Gorbachev's release.

Such a lack of principles is no crime, of course, and it would be ridiculous and illegal to persecute someone just for being a member of the CPSU. At the same time it would be wrong to regard CPSU membership merely as an innocent distinction from being non-Party. It was precisely the passiveness of the rank-and-file Party members that made the previous crimes and the recent coup possible. The Party in which progressives got along with reactionaries, and Social Democrats with National Socialists has had plenty of occasions to divide, i.e. to bring its differences out into the open. Nevertheless, it cherished its unity – the unity of wolves and lambs – more than anything else; as a result, secret quarrels developed into a coup.

Love for revolutions

There is a deep-seated faith in revolutions in our public mind: we have referred to both *perestroika* and the battle at the Russian White House as revolutions. We are justly proud of the three young men who lost their lives and of 70,000 others who were also prepared to die for the truth. On that fatal night it became clear that ours was no longer a nation of slaves.

In 1917, however, the Decree on Land and the Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia were welcomed not only by Bolsheviks themselves but by millions of people who knew well how unfair the old regime had been. As he watched the Red Guards, our great poet even imagined the one marching in front of them to be "Jesus Christ." Less than half a year later, the Constituent Assembly was disbanded, and the "Soviet way of life" set in, remaining practically unchanged to this day.

Having reduced societal changes to revolutions, we always hope that the ideas for the sake of which the revolutions are carried out will be implemented by others. Yet for these ideas to come true we are still to make many a choice and by defying the need for this everyday and not always noticeable effort we bring our revolutionary effort to naught. It should also be born in mind that the Communists are not alone in believing in arbitrary rule. We still identify totalitarianism with the CPSU, although it exists under different banners as well.

The free press – unless, of course, it calls for violence – is justly referred to as a cornerstone of democracy. By providing all-round and mutually verifiable information, it affords everyone a chance to make a deliberate choice. If we neither relinquish this freedom nor make the protection of democracy an exclusive responsibility of the so-called law-enforcement agencies, we shall always cope with any coups and any bids for dictatorship, and shall never relapse into slavery. Because in this case each of us will be able to make his own decisions.

ST. PETERSBURG

GERMANY

Of kings and flags

They say Otto von Bismarck commanded the coming generations never to break with S.Petersburg. Today, 120 years later, there is one Germany, and there again exists St.Petersburg. The apprehensions of olden days have again seized the Europeans

Dmitry Pogorzhelsky, 39, has taken up his office of *New Times* correspondent in Bonn. He graduated from Moscow State University and then worked at the newspaper *Komsomolskaya Pravda*. Ten years ago he joined our magazine. During the past few years he was a member of the *New Times* Editorial Board

Dmitry Pogorzhelsky

The German eagle has cast off its chains, has flaped its wings, and has issued a friendly scream. What now? Will it spread its wings and soar, not to attack, but to render help? Or will it be moodily sitting on its perch, pecking at rich food and preening its feathers with its hooked beak?

Timothy Garton Ash, English expert in German history and customs, wrote this a year ago, during Germany's reunification. For the past year Federal Germany has been discussing German foreign policy under new conditions. A year is a short span of time for a countru to get its bearings amits sudden reunification. Germany has really become a major factor of European policy, although it does not yet fell at ease in its new role. A *Süddeutsche Zeitung* poll has shown that two-thirds of the Germans mentions Switzerland and Sweden as examples to follow. Does it mean that an economic giant would like to remain a political darf? What prevents the eagle from spreading its wings and soaring?

"The German syndrome"

In December 1989 François Mitterrand hurried to the USSR to urge Mikhail Gorbachev not to allow a quick reunification of the two German states. Swift sudden changes had thrown Germany's neighbours into confusion. The fears of olden days had seized the Europeans again. Politicians in Moscow, Paris, London and Warsaw lost their peace of mind thinking of Europe once again in the iron grip of the Teutons. They even recalled Tacitus who noted that peace was alien to the Germans.

Fifty years ago the maxim of the ancient Roman historian developed into a stable "German syndrome." As a result, the Germans have been continually associated with the crimes of the Nazi regime. New faux pas in European and world politics have been expected from the Germans who are now reunited.

On can easily imagine the hullabaloo if, from the very beginning of the crisis in the Persian Gulf, the Bonn Governement had equipped a contingent and sent it to the area of conflict. People on the Rhine were in no hurry confident that it was better to try to bring the aggressor to reason with economic sanctions than to use military ways. When, with the UN blessing, the United States unleashed the war, Germany tried, on the one hand, to remain loyal to the Consitition which prohibited military ventures abroad, and, on the other, not to be stuck in isolationism. Germany reluctantly raised its banner, with its mine sweepers heading for the Gulf and its Finance Minister (with a bag of money) heading for Washington. The allies in the anti-Iraq coalition posed a question: did the Germans turn into rich and lazy malingerers who wanted to pay themselves off with 17,000 million marks?

However, half a year later when Hans-Dietrich Genscher mentioned possibly sending troops to Yugoslavia, under the aegis of the European Community, to try to stop the fractricidal war, he was checked to the effect that Germany ought to be more restrained because of its history.

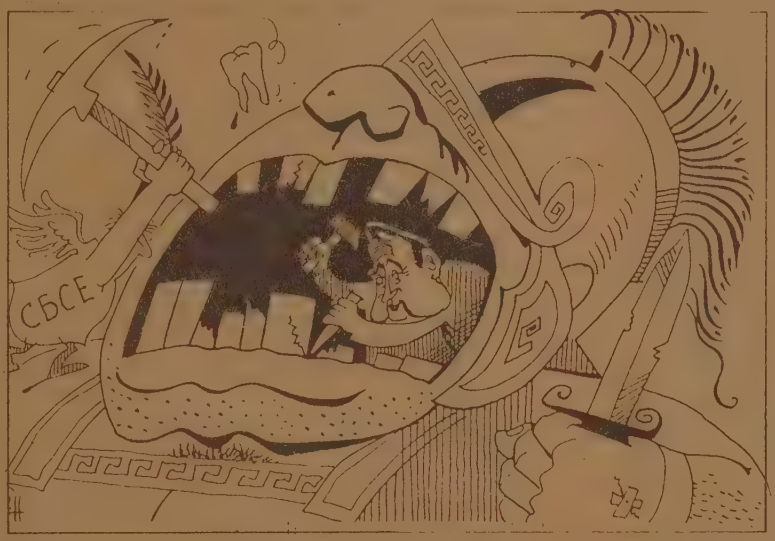
To Germany foreign policy is like walking in the minefield of the historical memory of European nations. Every incorrect step could cause an unexpected outburst of old grievances and fears.

German internal developments are also closely watched from outside, as if people do not believe the Germans and are trying to see their "true designs". The sallies of the right-wing radical groups in the new Federal lands irritated people in European capitals. Cruelties in the ex-GDR are abominable. They worry the Germans themselves who are very sensitive to violence and the violation of human rights. But why is the Old World inattentive to Le Pen's overt fascism which is gaining strength in France? And why does the Old World keep mum about overt anti-Semitism in Poland?

It was funny to see that some people regarded the symbolic reburying of the remnants of Frederick the Great, the Prussian King of the mid-18th century, as a kind of

restoration of German nationalism, militarism, and the Prussian spirit. To my mind, the fulfilment of "Old Fritz"'s will (to be buried side by side with his favourite dog in the Sanssouci park) two centuries later signifies the ultimate logical conclusion of that period of German history.

Suspicion and distrust towards the Germans and their policy prevent Germany from feeling itself on a par with others on the world scene and from acting in conformity with its increased influence and awareness of its own responsibility. The Germans have shown for the whole world to see that they have managed to overcome their tragic past, but have not forgotten it and have drawn necessary conclusions from it. For the first time in German history more than one generation has grown up in a democracy, which has become the only possible form of state structure and way of life for the Germans. The times of Arminius (Hermann), Kaiser Wilhelm, and Reichsk Kanzler Hitler have gone never to return. It's high time European nations rid themselves of the "German syndrome." Today European countries deal with an entirely new Germany and in a political system of fundamentally new principles.



The times of Teuton warriors have sunk into oblivion

A drawing from the magazine Auslandskurier (FRG)

What's in store for Europe?

Helmut Schmidt, ex-Chancellor of Federal Germany, noted that by the beginning of the coming century he would like the world to no longer have a German mark. Is Herr Schmidt sincere?

Beginning with the mid-1960s the main goal of German policy has been to integrate, to build up a united and powerful Europe without customs houses or boundries, with common currency, the common market of manpower, and common standards of living. This goal is not far off. In the opinion of Bonn politicians, however, the cause of paramount importance today is to crown the process of integration with the establishment of a political union pursuing common foreign policy in the field of security. It implies partial restriction of sovereignty. It might seem strange that, having gained sovereignty merely a year ago, Germany is ready to waive it and tries to persuade its partners to overcome the egotism of narrow nationalist interests. The main thing now is to combine efforts to tackle problems of international as well as regional importance.

Bonn experts believe that the European Community is the only international institution capable of using and distributing Germany's economic might for the welfare of all of Europe. It is also capable of rendering harmless the hotbeds of nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe. Chancellor Helmut Kohl is sure that Germany's reunification promotes, not prevents the earliest possible integration of Europe. Hans-Dietrich Genscher usually notes in this context that the Community is called European, not West-European.

Such statements also evoke discontent, in Paris above all. They say that German-French relations are ceasing to the basis of integration, that the Bonn officials are losing interest in the European Community, and are instead, turning to Russia and Eastern Europe, trying to expand the Community in order to dictate their will to it afterwards. These apprehensions have been aroused not by the policy of Germany, but by the confusion among the governement officials of the Old World after East European revolutions.

To remove suspicion German governement officials note, time and again, that their task of paramount importance is to unite Europe and to stabilize it. The Bonn officials would prefer the European Community to develop its own "Eastern policy," because it is impossible to shoulder unilaterally, entire burden of aid to new democratic regimes established on the giant territory of the former socialist camp, not to mention the adaptation of Eastern Germany.

Last year Federal Germany's football team won the World Cup, thus commemorating the historic reunification of Germany. Those were two unique occasions for the triumph of the German spirit. They were celebrated with champagne, fireworks, etc. The Bonn flag factory had a busy time. Its product, not the German black-red-golden tricolour, but that of the European Community, the blue one with 12 golden stars, was in great demand.

There has appeared a new trend in relations between the United States and West-European countries. Government officials in the United States and West-European countries understand very well that now that there is no longer a threat from the East, the US military presence in Europe becomes less expedient. Of course, the United States would like to stay in Europe to continue influencing its political developments. The French, the British, the Dutch, and the Poles would also like to have the Americans in Europe to "look after" the Germans. However, such a stand is not realistic. The US Administration right away found a way out and made an extremely flattering and alluring offer to the Bonn officials: a "partnership in leadership." The Bonn Government, just as its neighbours, however, remained rather cool towards that flirtation. After all, if there are leaders there should also be followers. Consideration for the opinion of its neighbours will probably make the German Government reject the magnificent offer. So, the two eagles will not be braving politics side by side.

What to do with the remnants of "the Empire"?

Germany's normalization of relations

on the international scene is impossible without stable contacts with the USSR. The swift disintegration of the Soviet Union has caused a certain confusion on the Rhine. The Bonn Government faces a far from easy problem. Whom to develop relations with: the waning central government or the republics vying with one another in declarations of independence? The decision is that the Governement should patiently wait for the situation to become clear and the jurisdiction of the new, sovereign, republics and the ex-Central Soviet Government to become fixed, bearing in mind that the republics will gain prestige and influence.

The German Government has been justified in its decision regarding Soviet developments after the abortive putsch. So far the German Government is not in a hurry to appoint ambassadors to Dyushambe or Kiev. However, appointments to Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia are a different case. The Germans have always felt special moral responsibility to those three.

Bonn officials point out that they will respect the right of nations to self-determination, but would prefer co-ordinated foreign policy carried out by a changed, but single Central Soviet Government. The crux of the matter is, though, that Soviet policy towards European countries generally, and Germany in particular, remains unclear. I touched upon this question in my talk with an influential Bonn official. That tactful gentlemen noted that I had spared him from telling me rather unpleasant things.

The Soviet Government has of late paid tremendous attention to its relations with the United States and little attention to relations with European countries. Moscow officials believe that the Germans will be forever grateful to them for the reunification of their country. Of course the Germans will entertain such feelings, but that has nothing to do with politics. In 1994 the last Soviet soldier will leave the territory of Federal Germany. The Soviet Government will, thus, lose the last opportunity of influencing German policy. (I doubt that this opportunity can be used even now.)

Can Germany serve as "a bridge to Europe" for the USSR? Moscow officials hope so, by the way. Influental Bonn official told me frankly that there was no way to the EC even for the renewed USSR, to say nothing of the fact that the EC membership envisaged a certain level of development which is yet far off for the USSR. The European Community simply would not be able to carry such a burden. More active co-operation with the European Community is possible, but without any kind of special relations with Germany. True, there will be the constant temptation of such an alliance, due to historical reasons and mutual predisposition. As soon as the Soviet Government tries to seek special relations with the German Government the anxieties of olden days will appear in the European Community again. And that will complicate the return of the Soviet Union to the civilized world.

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The Soviet contribution to the Middle East peace process

If a Middle East peace conference does indeed convene in October, this will be a significant achievement for international diplomacy. Much of the praise will naturally go to the efforts of the United States, and particularly to the patience of Secretary of State Jim Baker. But any observer looking beyond telegenic appearances will also have to admit that developments in Soviet policies and attitudes have greatly facilitated the convening of such a conference. It can be clearly stated that without these Soviet steps, a Middle East peace conference would still remain in the realm of wishful thinking.

What was the Soviet contribution? Ever since the 1967 War, Soviet diplomacy has seen an international conference, headed by the two Great Powers, as the appropriate way of solving the Arab-Israeli conflict; since the 1970's, the Soviet Union also made the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization a condition for such a conference. But the context of Soviet policies with regard to the Middle East made the Soviet policies appear highly unrealistic.

Let us recall: in 1967, the Soviet Union (and all Warsaw Pact countries except Romania) cut off diplomatic relations with Israel, and official Soviet attitudes to Israel took on the highly confrontational and ideological colouring of pre-*glasnost* Soviet pronouncements. Thus the Soviet Union was not considered by Israel as an "honest broker," who has to be able to talk to both sides. Soviet military, political and ideological support, in its uncritical pro-Arab bias, appeared to Israel as a threat, and thus Israeli governments (whether Labour or Likud) saw no reason to give Moscow further footing in the region through a role in the peace process: Israeli diplomacy preferred the much friendlier atmosphere of American mediating efforts, which led to the separation of forces agreements with Egypt and Syria after the 1973 War and eventually to the Camp David peace treaty. The Soviet policy of not allowing Jewish emigration as well as the suppression of Jewish culture within the Soviet Union helped to present the Soviet Union as an enemy of Israel and Zionism. And last but not least, Great Power competition meant that every diplomatic move was seen as a zero-sum game, in which a Soviet gain would be seen as an American loss, and vice versa. Consequently, the United States itself preferred its own diplomacy to any international context which would strengthen Soviet influence in the region.

Glasnost has fundamentally changed the Soviet position in the Middle East, though the changes have been gradual and incremental, sometimes even looking like "two steps forward, one step back." But over the last few years these changes amounted to a veritable Soviet new thinking about the nature of the conflict in the region. In the process of this new thinking, the Soviet position shifted from an uncritical and almost automatic support for Arab claims, sometimes in their most radical form, to a much more balanced and even-handed policy.

On the diplomatic level, the Soviet Union has not yet resumed full diplomatic relations with Israel: but at present this appears to be much more of an internal Soviet dilemma than an aspect of Soviet foreign policy. In practical terms, however, there have been constant and intensive diplomatic contacts, both at the highest as well as on working levels, between the Soviet Union and Israel – leading to the first visit ever of a Soviet Foreign Minister to Israel last spring. The existing consular relations between the two countries are much wider than their formal context: cultural, scientific, commercial and touristic co-operation between the two countries has been developed to a level unprecedented even before 1967. And while Israel is careful not to get involved in internal Soviet conflicts between the Union and the republics, a number of significant contacts have also been established between Israeli institutions and various republican authorities.

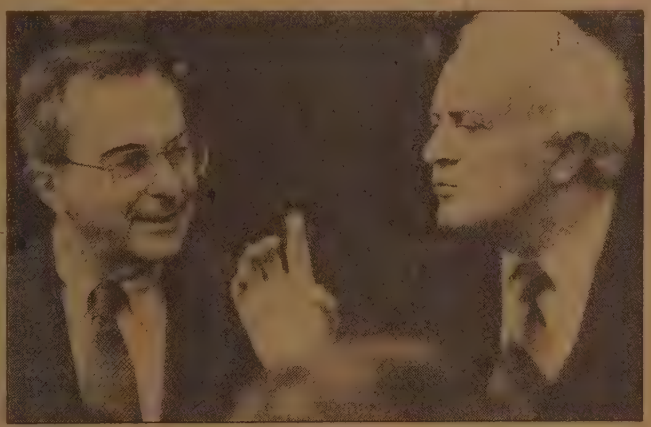
The Soviet position on the resolution of the conflict itself has, over the last few years, been re-defined in such a way that it does not differ significantly from that of the European Community or even the United States. While opposing continued Israeli control of the West Bank and Gaza, it realizes that Israel has legitimate security considerations that have to be addressed, and that the ultimate configuration of the structure of peace will have to be worked out in direct negotiations between the parties. While the general outline of the peace will have to follow the principles set out in Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, Moscow now realizes that the outcome of the negotiations themselves cannot be pre-determined in its details and has to be left to the parties concerned.

Moreover, Syria – Moscow's closest ally in the region – has been given to understand over the last few years that its attempt to achieve "strategic parity" with Israel (i.e., an offensive capability), will not be supported by the Soviet Union. It is reasonable to imagine that this Soviet position, made clear to the Syrian leadership at the highest Soviet level, has been instrumental in causing President Assad to reconsider his position and ultimately opt for the opportunity now offered by the possibility of a peace conference. The Soviet position during the Gulf crisis – despite its occasional zigzags – must have similarly convinced Assad that he does not possess a military option, nor will Moscow support it.

Soviet press reports about the Middle East have also been transformed with *glasnost,* and a much more sophisticated and knowleadgeable style of reporting about Israel has evolved. Many Soviet journalists have visited Israel, and their reports, while occasionally still critical of various aspects of Israeli government policies, have presented the Soviet reader (and observers in Israel) with a balanced picture of what is, by all accounts, a complicated situation, where rights and wrongs cannot be simplistically attributed to either side according to apre-conceived ideological matrix.

And finally – and most importantly – the lifting of the ban on Soviet immigration to Israel has helped to create a completely new climate of opinion in Israel about the Soviet Union, its policies and people. The Soviet Union no longer appears as the oppressor of Jewish cultural originality. The deep historical links between Russian culture and so many aspects of Israeli life – always in the background, but for decades overshadowed by ideological confrontation – have resumed their central place in Israeli perception and culture. Many Israelis now rediscover the roots of many aspects of Israeli literature, music and even political culture in the Russian background of the original founders of Israel, and the affinities between the two peoples are now again publicly recognized and even celebrated. The hundreds of thousands of recent Soviet immigrants will help to further accentuate this Russian ingredient in Israeli life.

The success of the Middle East peace conference is still far from sure, but a significant step forward has been taken, but the changes in Soviet policies and attitudes have greatly contributed to making a structure of peace in the Middle East a much more realistic prospect in the near future.



1989: E. Shevardnadze and M.Arens – the beginning of a thaw

Photo from Time magazine (USA)

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The way for democrats has been paved by socialists

Hungary's road back to Europe proves shorter than that of its former Comecon partners

The first year of activity of the Antall government looks successful. Last autumn, Hungary became the first East European country to join the Council of Europe, and at the end of next month, it will sign an agreement on association with the European Community, which considers Hungary the most stable East European country economically and politically.

The past year has also shown that even for Hungary, with its considerable practical and rich theoretical experience of reform, the return to European bodies has proved much more difficult than expected. The reason lies in vain hopes for generous Western aid and in domestic factors, such as the inability of people to buy privatized businesses and the dislocation of economic ties with some of the former socialist countries, mainly the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, the stability of the forint and the checking of inflation allow us to say that, though the economic barometer does not indicate "clear," its needle steadily holds at "partly cloudy."

The opposition has reproached the government with failing to take radical steps in the economy. However, a specific feature of Hungary is that the foundation, and largely the concept of the economy and policy of the post-totalitarian state, have been laid by the previous socialist government headed by Miklos Németh. Rezsö Nyers, Miklos Németh, Gyula Horn, Imre Pozsgay, Mátyás Szürös and other Socialists should be given credit for displaying considerable civil responsibility. They understood that the old system had no prospects for development and sacrificed their personal ambitions and careers to ensure a peaceful transition to a civil society.

True, unlike Soviet higher-ups, the people who laid the foundations of democracy in Hungary were not only members of the ruling party, but also specialists and professionals. For this reason they did not regard the loss of power as a tragedy. They knew that they would again be able to resume their work in the teaching, banking or business sphere.

Another prerequisite for "a peaceful" leave-taking by the ruling party in Hungary was the art of compromise inherited from the

1989. Hungarian border guards

Kádár times. Let's recall the slogan advanced by him in 1961: "He who is not against us is with us." It was under this slogan that he was able to reunite a society split after the events in the autumn of 1956. Thanks to his art of compromise he could use all the social and economic resources of the socialist system to gain the most favourable positions for Hungary in the socialist community, to avoid exerting pressure on potential opposition elements, and to save the old system from complete destruction by keeping 100,000 to 160,000 private craftsmen and petty traders.

The Hungarian Socialists were able to prove their affiliation with Europe by something more important than the country's geographic and economic proximity, by the very "philosophy" of transition without violence. The Németh cabinet advocated the European concept of "government for the people," not "the people for the government," thereby confirming its democratic maturity. Such was the foundation inherited by the National Christian cabinet of József Antall. This circumstance saved it from the need of taking urgent radical measures.

removing the "iron curtain"

Budapest's current foreign policy was also outlined to a considerable extent by the previous cabinet and to some extent by the policy conducted by Kádár in the late 1970s and early 1980s. It was called a cautious chess game, an allusion to the hobby of the Hungarian leader. We can recall Hungary's entry into the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development in 1982, the beginning of talks with the European Community, and attempts to play the part of a bridge between the East and the West in 1983 and 1984. In the 1980s, Hungary was the only Warsaw Treaty state which took part in the Alpine-Adriatic working community. The post-totalitarian countries of Eastern Europe have rallied today precisely on the basis of this non-bloc community.

Eastern Europe has acquired its present look thanks mainly to Hungary. Suffice it to recall the "Christmas revolt" in Romania ignited by the smouldering fire in Transylvania, in the parish of pastor László Tökés, the arrest of Hungarian journalists and members of Hungarian public organizations in Prague, and the Németh cabinet's first strike at the Berlin Wall, with its decision to allow about 50,000 citizens of the former German Democratic Republic to go freely to Austria. As a result, the conservative Honecker-Jakeš-Ceausescu triangle fell apart.

Hungarian experts have repeatedly stated that the bloc structure of Europe is an anachronism and tried to shake it loose. In September 1988, several months before Gorbachev's statement in the United Nations on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Eastern Europe, State Secretary in the Hungarian Foreign Ministry Gyula Horn called for the pullout of Soviet troops from the territory of his country. He advanced this proposal at the CSCE meeting in Vienna. In this concrete aspect of its foreign policy, the Soviet leadership's policy of new thinking was manifested only as a sound reaction to the situation that was taking shape in the region.

At the end of June, the last Soviet troops left Hungary. For many years, the republic lived in suspense, awaiting the breakup of the Warsaw Pact and Comecon, and this event finally happened. One would think that new agreements had to be concluded to reflect the changes that occurred in Hungarian-Soviet relations. However, no express desire has yet been evinced.

During the past year, the Hungarian premier's visit to Moscow for the purpose of signing a treaty on bilateral relations was postponed several times. The pre-coup leadership should have been asked why. It is not ruled out, however, that the new leadership will also follow the advice of the same experts obsessed with "cordon sanitaire" concepts. For instance, these experts insisted that a new treaty with Hungary contain a provision on the non-deployment of NATO's "hostile" troops on its territory. Since Moscow has admitted that NATO is no longer an enemy, there is no need to burden a new treaty with obtrusive provisions. The latest events in the world, from the Persian Gulf crisis to the failure of the coup in Moscow, have shown that NATO and the European Community have become the nucleus, around which a new system of international security, a new European home will most likely be shaped.

Lyubov Shishelina,
Candidate of Science (History)

Photo from Der Spiegel

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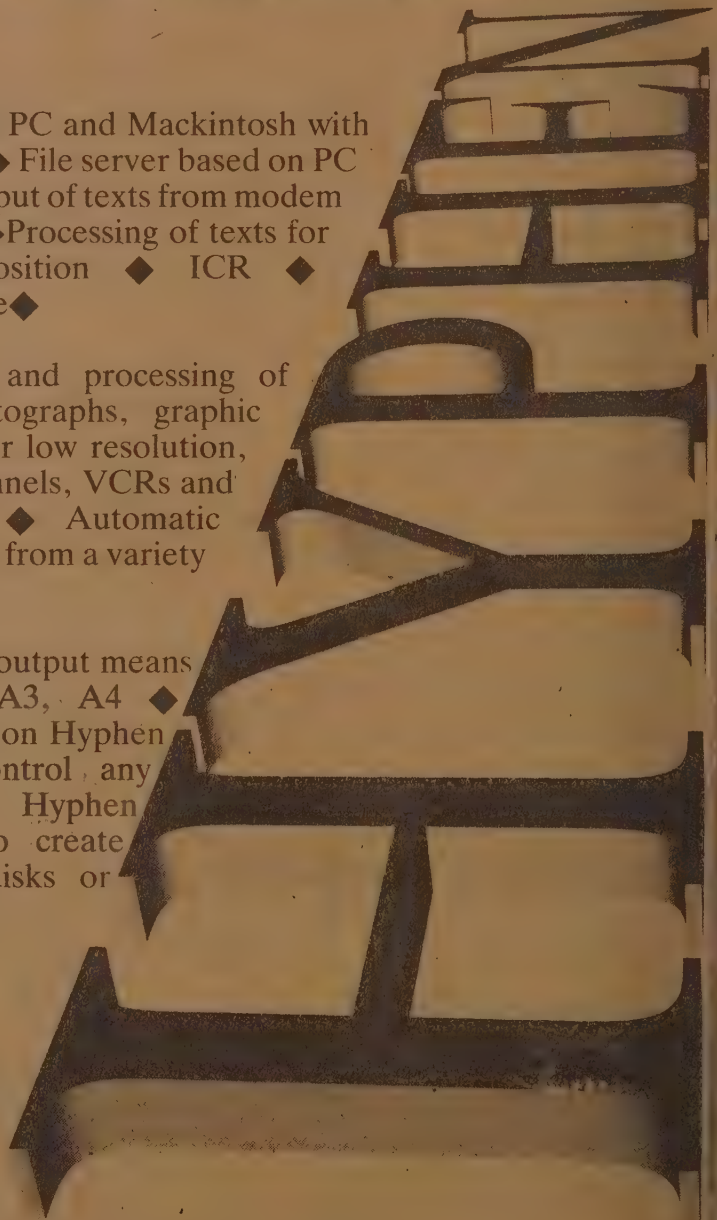

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The wise state opens its borders

Sergei Kovalyov,
head of the USSR delegation at the Moscow CSCE Conference on Human Dimension

From the very outset of the CSCE process in the 1970s many people in this country pinned on it their hopes for the democratic reform of the USSR and the implementation of the ideals of human rights and freedom

It was precisely in this country that an independent Helsinki public movement was born and the first national groups for promoting implementation of the Helsinki agreements were formed. The members of these groups were severely prosecuted, but the ideas of the movement were assimilated in other countries and became an important argument in opposing the totalitarian regime and the only dominant ideology. Humanitarian values of the common European process helped accomplish the recent radical changes in the USSR and other East European countries. In their turn, these changes make it possible for the countries of the "larger Europe" to reach a new level of cooperation. In the humanitarian sphere there have appeared symptoms of transition from declarations of intentions to concrete measures, evidenced by the creation of a mechanism for human dimension and the focusing of attention on the human personality as the principal object of the European nations' concerted efforts. We hope that the Moscow Conference will contribute to the consolidation of these tendencies.

Until recently many had seribus doubts concerning Moscow as a host city for the Conference. But now the situation has radically changed. Hopefully, after the abortive putsch the proce..ses of democratization in the USSR will gain intensity and depth.

Yet for the time being we must still state with regret that the human rights situation in the USSR can by no means be recognized as satisfactory.

I have every reason to make this assertion despite the fact that in recent years a whole set of legislative acts has been endorsed on both the Union and republican level designed to guarantee personal rights and freedoms. I have in mind the laws concerning the press and other mass media, public associations, freedom of conscience and religious associations and a number of other acts. However, many of the recently adopted laws are not in keeping with the universally accepted standards and require perfection and sometimes even revision.

One such law is the emigration and immigration law in which, to begin with, the maximum term of refusal to issue an emigration visa for reasons of state security should be reduced perhaps to five years. In the future it will probably be necessary to consider the possibility of cancelling limitations of this kind as contradicting the principle of presumption of innocence.

A well-grounded concern is aroused by many clauses of the law regulating activities of the KGB and police, including that of the Russian Federation. They not only fail to guarantee personal freedom, sanctity of the home, privacy of correspondence and telephone communication, and even the right to life, they even provide for the possibility of infringement of these rights.

Such is the situation in those domains where preliminary legislative reforms have already been undertaken. But so far the juridic reform has touched only an insignificant part of those spheres where human rights are constantly violated.

I think such violations in this country, may be classified in three groups.

I would include in the first those mass violations that characterized all past decades of the Soviet society's life and have persisted to this day almost unchanged.

Practically nothing has been done so far to abolish such humiliating institutions as place of residence registration (the so called *propiska*) although as early as last May the President gave instructions to this effect. The regime of control over migration and travelling of citizens inside the country imposed by the totalitarian regime is akin to feudal bondage. Yet even the economic reform will not be successful if the citizens of the country are not granted freedom to chose their place of residence within its boundries. Hopefully, in the near future there will be endorsed legislative acts aimed at abolishing this institution.

Soviet society is deeply concerned with the

Drawing by V.Soldatov

situation in the army. Numerous instances of humiliation, cruel treatment of servicemen and insulting have lately come to people's attention. Lethal cases are not infrequent. But investigation of such cases is conducted superficially and far from impartially. There may be only one way out – an all-embracing military reform and openness in matters concerning army life and public control over everything that takes place in army units. A revision of army manuals and their conformity to the legislation is absolutely necessary. I would like to emphasize here the necessity of an immediate enforcement of an alternative service law as befits a civilized state, which wold conform to univer sal tendencies. The draft law is ready, now it is the legislators' turn to have their say. The question has been raised about revision of the cases of those convicted for refusal to serve in the army. Amnesty of this category of convicts would have alleviated another burning problem of our society.

We will never be able to shift from words to deeds in the domain of human rights protection or make tangible progress in forming genuine democratic institutions until we create a strong and truly independent juridicial power. Only such a "third power" can become the real guarantee against arbitrariness of the state. For that purpose the status of judges who, unfortunately, still remain practically mere state's clerks must be raised. The system of appealing against state organs needs further improvement. Much can be done to enhance the role of counsels for defence, secure rights of suspects and defendants and regulate the norms of preliminary investigation and administrative miscarriages.

The conditions in places of confinement is another dire problem. Overcrowded cells, chronic diseases, lack of proper medical aid, cruel punishments for any misdemeanor, and arbitrariness on the part of the personnel far from exhaust the list of long-standing problems in this sphere. It's true that at present a draft law providing for punishment for torture or cruel treatment of prisoners is being worked out. But, as our experience demonstrates, adoption of a good law doesn not entail its enforcement. This problemn must be solved along several lines simultaneously: in addition to new legislative acts, practical measures to improve the situation in penitentiary institutions are necessary, as well as proper education of personnel for law-enforcement bodies.

I believe it's time to raise the question of abolishing capital punishment and resorting to long-term and lifelong confinement instead.

Prosecution of citizens for political reasons is being gradually banished from the penal code of our country (Excluded from the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation is the "political" Article 190-1 and Article 70 has been considerably revised; now it's time to cancel Article 142 and 227 used to prosecute for religious activity.)

However, the process of restoring justice to the victims of legislation must be broadened and intensified. All innocent victims of political repressions that have taken place during the entire Soviet period must be acquitted. And, of course, Soviet citizenship must be returned to those arbitrarily deprived of it.

Formerly the use of psychiatry for penal purposes caused much concern. Now the problem of observing the rigths of persons suffering from mental illness requires greater attention. A draft law on mental treatment has been worked out. It provides guarantees against abuses in this sphere. According to the assessments of experts of the World Psychiatric Association the draft conforms to international standards. Nevertheless, a cardinal im-

provement of the situation will require solution of complicated problems with participation of independent, including international, experts – psychiatrists and lawyers. It is necessary to form independent expert commissions and to entrust them with the corresponding powers to exercise control.

The degree of maturity of a democratic society is measured by the extent to which a person is protected against arbitrary actions of the state. Therefore creating an effective mechanism for restoring personal rights and freedoms in the country is a very important task. Russia's Parliament has already begun carrying it out. It has elaborated a constitutional norm of instituting the post of ombudsman whose duty will be to supervise the observance of human rights.

The next category of violations of human rights has a more specific and, in a sense, a more "modern" character. It concerns the recent actions of influential structures of central power which attempted to preserve their former status and prevent the process of republics' gaining sovereignty. These structures are also responsible for the use of the army in Alma Ata, Tbilisi, Baku, Vilnius, Riga, Nagorny Karabakh and other regions. These crimes have not as yet been investigated by the Procurator's Office of the USSR with sufficient impartiality and depth. Moreover, we have witnessed shameful attempts to flagrantly mislead world public opinion. We regard such an investigation as one of today's priority tasks of the Procurator's Office. I am sure that the Soviet side will forward exhaustive information in response to the inquiries sent us within the framework of the CSCE Conference for Human Demension and will inform the UN Commission for Human Rights about the investigation of the tragic events in Lithuania and Latvia.

Now concerning the third category of violations.

The emergence of independent national states on the territory of our country is not, unfortunately, coupled by an all-around improvement in the domain of human rights. In many cases the opposite tendency can be observed.

In some regions we come across persecution for convictions, sometimes even arrests of political opponents, and refusal to register opposition parties and public associations. Peaceful rallies and demonstrations are banned or dispersed by force; information containing criticism of authorities is curtailed; independent journalists are prosecuted.

The greatest concern is due to the hotbeds of mass violation of human rights where the lives and security of large population groups is constantly threatened. By these I mean first of all the regions of ethnic conflicts where residential areas are daily under fire and shelling which results in casualties among non-combatants; acts of forcible deportations, terrorism, pogroms and hostage-taking, torture and cruel treatment. As a result, hundreds of thousands of people become refugees. At times these rights violations are done by law-enforcement bodies, in particular, by special police units under republican governments, which is especially intolerable.

Unfortunately, the number of such hotbeds of human rights violation does not decrease. They are widely known, they have been spoken of in this hall. Of course historical, economical and psychological roots of ethnic conflicts are too deep to be analized here. Probably there is no common prescription which could settle all conflicts. But I do believe that common principles on which further democratic development of the society can be based are sufficiently clear. These include affirmation of the priority of the law, rejection of violence, initiation of a serious productive dialogue, guarantee of personal rights and freedoms unhindered by discrimination on the entire geographical space of the country. I am convinced that a productive role in untangling ethnic controversies can be played by independent intermediaries, including international ones.

Transformations of state structures on the USSR's entire territory give birth to new realities on the European continent. In is important to realize even today that observance of committments concerning human rights, which was formerly the almost exclusive responsibility of the central government now, within the framework of the nascent union of sovereign states, becomes to a large degree the responsibility of the republics.

Problems of observing human rights long ago ceased to be an exclusively internal affair of an individual state. Moreover, states are interested in effective international control if they are wise and courageous enough to rise above selfishness and specific ethnic interests.

It seems to me that the evolution of the CSCE, especially in recent years, and the creation of mechanisms for human dimension make it possible to include in the agenda of the common European forum the item of collective responsibility of the CSCE member-states for preventing serious breaches of human rights and preserving and strengthening democratic institutions. We know that a preliminary examination of these ideas is already under way.

Concrete measures for further development and, I would say, radicalization of the mechanism for human dimension is quite possible. The suggestion of instituting CSCE observers in every participating state seems worth considering. As independent experts, they could give impartial assessments of observance of human rights by the participating states and draw other countries' attention to hazardous situations as the need arises.

The idea of instituting CSCE inspectors who could visit regions where human rights are violated and put forward their conclusions could also be fruitful. They could also investigate individual cases. We proceed from the assumption that missions of such inspectors would be based on the of non-refusal principle, with receiving states extending to them cooperation in their duties.

Thinking over the ways to implement the Paris Charter clause on non-government organization's drawing into the common European process we come to the conviction that this initiative could be promoted by granting them a consultative status at the CSCE. Of course this new status must by no means influence their independent character or such time-proven forms of their activity as parallel actions which have demonstrated their usefulness and importance.

The article is based on the report presented by S.Kovalyov to the Moscow CSCE Conference on Human Dimension.

PAST AND PRESENT

The adventures of the Popular Labour Alliance (NTS) in Russia

Boris Miller, a member of the NTS administrative board, was banished from the USSR last November. The KGB accused him of engaging in subversive activities and organizing a conspiracy. Now that the KGB-organized conspiracy has failed, the NTS has opened its office in Moscow, and Miller has applied for Soviet citizenship

Boris MILLER on what the KGB referred to as "the Popular Labour Alliance's subversive activity"

The Popular Labour Alliance (NTS) was set up in the thirties by children of White Guards émigrés, who wanted to know more than their parents could tell them about the causes of the revolution, of the Bolsheviks' victory, of enormous emigration – and simply about the situation in their homeland. They came to the conclusion that at the time of crisis, the Bolsheviks had taken advantage of Russia lacking the spiritual forces capable of leading it in the right historical direction. Those young people ventured to launch a campaign against Bolshevism. They decided on a war of ideas as the principal means of effecting Russia's deliverance from communism...

The first, so-called Belgrade, period (from 1930 to the outbreak of the war) was the organization's formative one. By 1940, we had only outlined our programme and ideology based on works by the Russian philosophers Frank, Levitsky and Gins.

At that time emigration was rich in political parties and organizations, most of which engaged in terrorism. The Bratstvo Russkoi Pravdy organization, for instance, smuggled terrorist groups into Russia. Those were caught by Cheka men, as a rule... The Russian Military Alliance (ROVS by its Russian initials) was the biggest organization in those years. The organization, composed of army officers, was headed by General Vrangel first, later by General Kutepov, and finally, by General Miller. Kutepov and Miller were kidnapped and died under unknown circumstances.

Many young ROVS officers later joined the NTS, so one can say that the latter is the ROVS successor. From the very beginning, however, the NTS avoided terrorism, dismissing it as being absurd.

It was extremely difficult to obtain information, essential for our work, from Russia. As we sent our men there, we set all our hopes on God. At first, we used the ROVS channels, and all our agents were killed as soon as they crossed the border. Now we know why: General Skoblin in charge of the "ROVS closed line" was an NKVD agent...

It was only at the very end of the thirties that we finally succeeded in setting up a channel of our own. Georgy Okolovich and his companion, Kolkov, safely crossed into Russia, toured the whole country, visited many cities, and, a few months later, came back via Poland. That caused quite a stir and made the NTS world famous.

Before the outbreak of World War II, Germany began to show interest in our organization. However, the NTS adopted the following resolution: "...as a Russian patriotic organization, we shall side neither with the Bolsheviks, nor with the likely aggressors, i.e., Germany, in the coming developments."

The Germans invited the NTS leaders to Berlin, suggested that we cooperate with them and offered us substantial financial aid. That was a tempting proposal, because we were hard up for funds then, but the then NTS leaders refused to cooperate with the Germans and declined their offer of money. As a result, the NTS branches in Germany, Italy and, later, on the occupied territories were closed.

As the Germans occupied Soviet territories, the NTS sought to penetrate into them in every way so as to influence the situation. Towards the end of the war, people born and raised in the Soviet Union constituted more than a half of the organization's membership.

Did we cooperate with the Nazis? Before I answer this question, let us make it clear what is meant by cooperation.

Was a baker, for instance, who baked bread in an occupied territory, a collaborationist? On the other hand, informers, interrogators and Gestapo inter-

Alexander Kutepov led NTS after Vrangel. He was kidnapped and died under unknown circumstances

Evgeny Miller, like Kutepov, was kidnapped and killed

preters certainly were. I knew only one case of an NTS member interpreting for the Germans – I was personally acquainted with that man. He called on Okolovich, then the chief of the NTS network in occupied territories, and said: "I've been offered a translator's job in the Gestapo, it might give me access to important information." "This is a very tempting offer," Okolovich replied, "but the decision rests with you. The local people will brand you as a traitor, and this brand does not wash off..." Incidentally, the NTS automatically expelled from its ranks those who collaborated with the Germans.

Right after the war, we worked mostly in DP camps on the territory controlled by the USSR's allies in the anti-Nazi coalition. In accordance with the Yalta Conference resolutions, all Soviet citizens had to be repatriated to the USSR regardless of whether or not they had cooperated with the Germans. Even those who had emigrated long before the war were repatriated by force.

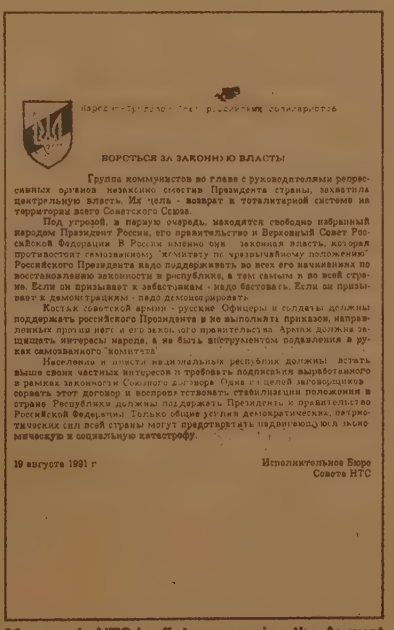
Special commissions, each consisting of four officers – British, French, American and Soviet – worked in the DP camps. All of them spoke Russian. They interrogated camp inmates, and if someone could not prove that he had lived abroad before the war, he was subject to repatriation. I was confined to such a camp myself in September 1944, in Austria, and spent three years there. Prisoners did all they could to get permission to stay in the West.

Back in 1945, when still in the DP camp, we started a magazine, called *Posev* (Seeds). That was followed by the literary journal *Grani* (Aspects) and books. At that time the West cared absolutely nothing for Russian immigrants' problems. What mattered to it was cooperation with the Soviet Union, and any opposition was strongly discouraged. Therefore we printed, by way of a provocation, a number of leaflets in a camp, calling for an attack on the Soviet government. The British arrested one of us right away. As a result, we got a chance to enter into a dialogue with them: our man was under arrest for seven weeks and spoke on our behalf during interrogations.

Most of our leaders were arrested in 1944; fifty-four of them died in German camps, in gas chambers. Vladimir Poremsky, one of the NTS leaders, was accused of having translated into Russian and distributed the book *Europe and the Soul of the Orient* by Walter Schubert and of membership in the NTS. They even sewed a black triangle onto his camp uniform, marking him as a condemned man, and it was only the arrival of the Americans that saved him. After that miraculous salvation, the NTS delegated Poremsky, fluent in five languages, to negotiations with the British so that he could try and talk them out of handing people over to the Soviet authorities by force. The British gave him a cordial reception, only to put him in one of their concentration camps, where he spent a year and a half.

Towards the end of the forties, the situation changed entirely, East-West relations became strained, and DP camps were closed down. We worked out a new programme, which emphasized the need for setting up a revolutionary organization on the territory of Stalin's Russia. That was to be an organization of a special type – molecular, i.e., consisting of small groups each operating on its own so that the arrest of one group should not wreck the whole network.

At first, the NTS organized the launching of balloons. One of our engineers, Kirsanov



ВОРОТЬСЯ ЗА ЗАКОННУЮ ВЛАСТЬ!

Группа коммунистов во главе с руководителями репрессивных органов незаконно отстранила Президента страны, захватила центральную власть. Их цель - возврат к тоталитарной системе на территории всего Советского Союза.

Под угрозой, в первую очередь, находится свободно избранный народом Президент России, его правительство и Верховный Совет Российской Федерации. В России именно они - законная власть, которая противостоит самозванному, жесткому по чрезвычайному положению Российского Президента надо поддерживать во всех его начинаниях по восстановлению законности в республике, а тем самым и во всей стране. Если он призывает к забастовкам - надо бастовать. Если он призывает к демонстрациям - надо демонстрировать.

Костяк советской армии - русские. Офицеры и солдаты должны поддержать российского Президента и не выполнять приказов, направленных против него и его законного правительства. Армия должна защищать интересы народа, а не быть инструментом подавления в руках самозванного "комитета".

Население и власти национальных республик должны встать выше своих частных интересов и требовать подписания выработанного в рамках законности Союзного Договора. Одна из целей заговорщиков сорвать этот договор и восстановить тоталитарное положение в стране. Республики должны поддержать Президента и правительство Российской Федерации. Только общие усилия демократических, патриотических сил всей страны могут предотвратить надвигающуюся экономическую и социальную катастрофу.

19 августа 1991 г

Исполнительное Бюро Совета НТС

Moscow's NTS leaflet concerning the August 19 putsch

At first, the NTS organized the launching of balloons. One of our engineers, Kirsanov by name, designed a balloon capable of carrying 100 kilos of literature. Upon receiving a favourable wind direction forecast, we sent a hydrogen-filled balloon across the Soviet border. We usually attached three large "parcels" to it. The first one, containing literature in Polish, was dropped over the Polish territory. Relieved of part of its load, the balloon rose higher and flew farther on. The second and third "parcels" were intended for Russia. On one occasion, such a balloon landed in South Korea...

Then we started sending to the USSR our men residing in the West. The Americans took us there by air, and then we bailed out. The first four men – Makhov, Remiga, Lakhno and Gorbunov – were arrested and shot as "American agents." The members of the second group were arrested and locked up for ten years each...

Later, Soviet merchant marines and fishermen began to appear in the West. We had our men in every port, who met them, gave them literature and tried to enlist them in our organization. During my previous stay in the USSR, I met with Victor Aksyuchits, now the leader of the Christian Democrats. In those early years he was a political instructor, who had been sent abroad for the express purpose of taking "subversive literature" away from seamen. He read this literature himself, however, and told me, when we met, that it had "reformed" him.

Upon my release from the camp, I left for Chile and returned to Europe in 1959. Till 1972, I was engaged in carrying out the NTS' "covert operations" and therefore I know this aspect of our activity well.

Soviet troops were stationed in both Germany and Austria then. We often used girls residing in the Eastern zone as recruiting agents. One 19-year-old German girl drew

20 Soviet army officers into the NTS! When pinched, she was sentenced to 20 years in jail – a year for each man she had recruited. Ten years later she turned up in the West: the GDR was always short of food, therefore the government of that country exchanged its prisoners for meat and butter. The girl was among 100 prisoners exchanged for a certain amount of food.

We worked with tourists and athletes, too. One day we received a noteworthy letter from Moscow. A Muscovite informed us that he had got some of our literature from someone he knew. "That man is a scoundrel, I'm telling you!" the letter-writer exclaimed. "Today no decent person can go abroad with a Soviet passport. How could you trust such a man?" However, even those screened by Soviet authorities often displayed interest in "dangerous" ideas and joined our organization. We allowed them to remain members of the Communist party...

Then came Khrushchev's "thaw." Poetry recitals at the Mayakovsky monument in Moscow... There were many extremely interesting personalities among those youths. They included Yuri Galanskov, whose remains were brought in from Mordovia recently and re-buried. He had first contacted us in 1959, and joined the NTS in 1967.

Galanskov, Ginsburg, Kuznetsov and Osipov issued underground publications, named *Sintaksis, Boomerang, Feniks-66*. The NTS printed them and then smuggled them back into Russia.

We were also active in the human rights movement. We raised a hullabaloo for all the world to hear by a very simple method: by sending foreigners, ready to do time in Soviet prison camps, to Moscow, where they demonstrated in Red Square, in the GUM and TSUM department stores and spread leaflets, demanding the release of political prisoners – Galanskov, Grigorenko, Gorbanevskaya. Because they were foreigners, their protest actions were immediately front-paged by their countries' papers.

We organized a series of such actions in 1972. First, two Italians chained themselves to a railing at the TSUM store and started throwing leaflets thus proving their right to demonstrate and to protect innocent victims. And you know what? Many in the crowd that surrounded them helped distribute those leaflets! While the administration phoned someone, and before uniformed men arrived on the scene, bringing along a man with a hacksaw to remove the chains, much time elapsed. All that went on amid deafening noise and much laughter, as more and more people poured in to enjoy the sight... We had tipped off foreign newsmen in advance, of course. In general, we created quite a scandal.

One of the Italians was connected with the FIAT company, which was building a motor factory in Russia at the time. The company lodged a protest. Instead of letting the Italian go, however, the KGB held him for a while, and Western papers commented on that from day to day. As a result, many in the West began to wonder whom those two had remonstrated for. To satisfy their curiosity, the papers carried information on Soviet political prisoners.

On the day following the TSUM accident, an Indian citizen handed out leaflets in the Operetta Theatre. Later, a Norwegian did the same in Nevsky Prospekt in Leningrad. Each was sentenced to a year in jail, but set free right after the trial – otherwise Moscow would have lost the FIAT. After all, it couldn't very well release the Italians but retain the others.

At the end of the fifties and in the early sixties, an opportunity presented itself for sending to the USSR as tourists people who were willing to smuggle our literature across the border. That was real heroism. First, they took risks as they went through the customs examination procedure, and then they had to carry the literature on them for a week... Upon reaching Galanskov, for instance, such a messenger exchanged his load for as heavy a load of "samizdat" (home-printed) publications.

We made special clothes for such messengers, with underwear pockets and other such contraptions. Nevertheless, there were several failures. The best-known case is that of Gerald Brooke, who served a five-year prison sentence in the USSR.

We spent rather much money on security arrangements and strictly observed "the rules of the game." While in certain countries I was not supposed to speak Russian, for instance. On our way to the headquarters, we had to change several trains and to make sure we were not followed. That took an awful lot of time and money, but we knew it was necessary to take such precautions.

The KGB had always tried to infiltrate the NTS. In 1954, KGB Captain Nikolai Khokhlov, sent over to have Georgy Okolovich murdered, defected to our side. He knew the KGB agents "assigned" to the NTS, and exposed four of them. One, Khorunzhi by name, a former Soviet serviceman who had fled to the West probably on assignment and worked in our printshop, appeared on Soviet television recently in a bathrobe against the background of a Black Sea beach and delivered a tirade against the NTS. There were three more agents – one in Lebanon, another in Austria, and still another somewhere else.

Now, at last, there is no more need to take security precautions...

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НОВОЕ ВРЕМЯ

"Can't anyone hear me...?"

I saw women wearing shabby black clothes and rubber boots, carrying string-bags full of official papers and various appeals at every session or other undertaking on human rights of the CSCE Moscow Conference on Human Dimension. They represented the vast world of human sorrow in the disintegrating USSR. Among them were Georgians from Ossetia, Ossetians from Georgia, some of the Russian-speaking population (as they are called) of Moldova, refugees from Azerbaijan and the Nagorno-Karabakh Region, and women from the wrecked encampment at the Moscow Kremlin wall. Tragic destinies, broken lives. They did not listen to the respectable, so to speak professional, human rights defenders who described in florid style some human dimension conference in Copenhagen. The very term "human dimension" was not quite clear to them (as was true of most of the people, by the way). These women wanted the world to know about their sorrow. No one heeded them except an Orthodox priest in the lobby. (The clergy attend all official gatherings today.) While having his free cup of coffee, a parson might listen to a hapless woman, might bless her, and tell her "to be good and behave prudently, and in accordance with the situation." I noticed that more and more often those women enthusiastically crowded around Zhirinovsky, (This post-Communist Messiah never turns them out. He uses their arguments in his risky gamble.)

Yakov Borovoi

At a session Irakly Kadagishvili, member of the Chief Committee of Georgia's National Democratic Party, spoke about the tyranny of Gamsakhurdia and the arrest of Chanturia, leader of the National Democratic Party. But the audience shouted him down. "You Georgians are to blame for all that yourselves. No one forced you to vote for him!" shouted women in black.

Journalist Nonna Katinskaya has a far from happy life. At the age of eight she lost her parents. In the seventies she had a conflict with the Omsk Regional Party Committee and a certain Manyakin, evidently the First Secretary of that Committee. As a result, she landed in a mental institution where she was declared incapacitated and "incapable of coherent thinking." Today she is the editor of *Otverzhennye* (Outcasts), the independent newspaper of the former encampment at the Kremlin wall. She publishes this newspaper, about the victims of the totalitarian system, partially with her own money. "Mr. Borovoi," Nonna Katinskaya said, "will you read this paper and tell me, please, could a mad woman make it?" I looked through the paper and told her that it was professionally done. "We are neither Democrats, nor Communists. We are outcasts," said Katinskaya.

I noticed a woman who was crying all the time. She was from the Nagorno-Karabakh Region. Her father and her son had been killed. On her lapel I saw their photographs in a black frame. People avoided her. From time to time she looked up, tears in her eyes, and uttered: "Can't anyone hear me?..." But nobody heeded.

Ivan Volik represented the All-Ukrainian Society of People Subjected to Repression. He had been arrested eight times, unlawfully, as he noted. More than once he did time in Soviet GULAG camps. He was expelled from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union ("three times," he emphasized) and was rehabilitated in 1988. He blamed the CPSU and the KGB for his misfortunes. While addressing the audience, Ivan Volik turned against Reshetova, Chairman of the Human Rights Commission of the USSR Supreme Soviet, who was in the presidium of the Conference. "She was well-off during the stagnation period," he declared, and was denied the right to speak those "blasphemous words." The mike switched off, Ivan managed to shout for all to hear: "And let's not fool with the Jewish question. I have nothing against the Jews, but they have seized everything, this Conference included. Who is there to protect them from? I can't remember a case when a Jew came to work at a collective farm, state farm, coal mine, or a blast-furnace..." The Chairman of the session tried to stop him and threatened to call a militiaman. "For goodness' sake, gentlemen, why the Jews again? What have they to do with this?" Father Pavel exclaimed.

My main impression of the CSCE Moscow Conference on Human Dimension was: official human rights defenders, on the one hand, and the world of human sorrow, on the other

Another speaker, a woman from the Dniester area of Moldova, called the Democrats "Demoncrats", cursed them violently, and gave the following example of their perfidy: "Yesterday, when I was at Popov's Municipal Council, an electronic beam was shot at me. I was all violet for a full five minutes!"

In intervals between sessions three small girls with a red tilak on the forehead performed Indian dances. Conference delegates, "outcasts" among them, gave small change to the dancers. The young creatures wanted to leave the Soviet Union for India which they considered their "historical homeland."

At the Conference every effort was made to find a scapegoat. That successfully done, everything would be fine and there would be no problems, people believed.

Conference delegates kept away from Soviet journalists who could be "of no help." They tried to catch God-fearing foreigners and hand out petitions for aid to them. Apparently foreign aid was their only hope.

Meanwhile, "professional" human rights defenders delivered long speeches, discussed and adopted long resolutions. A speaker from Volgograd championed a "minimum nuclear peace". Another speaker, from Nizhny Novgorod, urged the audience to start legal proceedings against Communists for "their crimes". One of the delegates, Sergei Nikologorsky, a poet, psychologist, and journalist, represented a Party of World. (To tell the truth, I had never heard of that party before.). "There are few of us so far," Sergei told me, "but our Teacher Jesus Christ also had few disciples at first." He urged the audience to promulgatge and accept no ideology but the ideology of happiness, to ban abortions, "that murder of innocent infants in their mothers' wombs," and to permit polygamy (women were confused, and men hailed those words). "We stand for a subsequent union of Great Russia, Great Europe, and America. We are for the formation of a united state of all humankind, a Union of World, or a United States of World," Sergei Nikologorsky said in conclusion. I could not find out from him why nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America would not have access to that paradise.

I hurried from the Conference hall ill at ease. Passing by Frederic Bronkema, a lawyer from the United States, I noted: "Don't you think that we have gotten into a lunatic asylum?" "No," said the American ruefully, "the whole world has gone crazy, but far from everyone can conceal it."

Our man in Kabul

A night visit to the TASS villa

Alexander Morozov

Following the successful April 1978 coup Taraki's faction (Khalq) and Karmal's faction (Parcham) at first equally shared the laurels of the victors: each got about the same number of key posts in the post-revolutionary PDPA Central Committee and its Politbureau, the Revolutionary Council of the People's Republic of Afghanistan, and in the government. Khalqist Nur Mohammad Taraki became the nation's primary political figure, chairing the Revolutionary Council and occupying the post of Prime Minister. Second to him was Parchamist Babrak Karmal securing for himself, in a unanimous vote, positions of Vice Chairman of the Revolutionary Council and Deputy Prime Minister.

Such a top-level layout suited everyone but, perhaps, Hafizullah Amin who got portfolios of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Capitalizing on the circumstance that he had led the successful coup and freed Taraki from Daud's prison, Amin (with Taraki's silent consent) began to establish his own control over the army and the Ministry of the Interior. Ignoring opinions of the Defence Minister, Abdul Kadir, and Minister of the Interior, Noor Ahmad Noor – both of whom were fairly close to Karmal politically – Amin began a personnel reshuffle in the respective ministries and eventually seized control of all links with the head of the Soviet military advisers group, General Lev Gorelov, and later with the top CPSU adviser in Afghanistan, Semyon Veselov, as well as General Nikolai Veselkov from the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The expansion of Amin's influence awoke Karmal's own ambitions. One fine morning he told Taraki that he would rather resign from his jobs with the government and the Revolutionary Council and wholely devote himself to development of modifications of the PDPA's strategy and tactics to suit the present conditions – since no one seemed to accept his authority as the nation's second in command. Taraki didn't like hearing that. He told

Continued from No.38

July 14, 1979,Taraki celebrated his 62nd (and last) birthday. Amin's men recorded the celebration (which turned into a huge drinking spree), in order to use the film to blackmail Taraki afterwards

The Soviet Ambassador actually OK'ed reprisals against Karmal and his men

Amin about his concern, and the latter advised Taraki to get rid of Karmal and other Parchamists who, according to Amin, had "almost completely abstained from participation in the April 27-28 armed uprising and even tried to sabotage it."

Karmal exiled into ambassadorship

Taraki had a bright idea: to copy Moscow's practice and send Karmal and his supporters away in the capacity of Afghanistan's ambassadors. Taraki felt however that he should discuss the matter with the USSR Ambassador, Alexander Puzanov (Taraki wasn't aware that Puzanov had met with a similar misfortune back in 1956 when Nikita Khrushchev

had been displeased with him and removed him from the post of the Russian Federation Council of Ministers Chairman and sent him off to North Korea as the USSR Ambassador).

Puzanov deemed Taraki to be an "important Marxist-Leninist," "renowned literary author," and "prominent statesman." It pleased Puzanov's ego that Taraki, unlike Daud, was always ready to receive him at any time and without delay.

I learned from Karmal's friends what Puzanov had told Taraki: if he, Karmal, failed to grasp the meaning of the situation, and if he were a hindrance to the PDPA's leaders, then he must go to Washington and learn about statesmanship from Dobrynin, the Soviet Ambassador there. According to Karmal's friends, Taraki claimed that his decision had been prompted by Puzanov.

At the routine conference at the embassy the next morning, Ambassador Puzanov described, for the sake of his colleagues, his meeting with Taraki. Puzanov claimed that during the meeting he had been the listener and never the adviser, and that words: "let Comrade Karmal learn from Comrade Dobrynin" had actually been spoken by Taraki. The ambassador tried to impart a humorous touch to the matter, downplaying its importance. Apparently he realized a day later turning over the incident in his mind that he had stretched his authority too far and blundered into gross interference in matters of exclusive concern of the PDPA's leaders. However it was not likely that Puzanov realized then or years later that his interference had triggered a fierce feud within the PDPA.

The ambassador didn't report his blunder to Moscow.

Shortly thereafter, Afghanistan's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hafizullah Amin, announced new nominations: Babrak Karmal, Anahita Ratebzad, Noor Ahmad Noor and a few other close supporters of the Parcham leader were made ambassadors. However, Taraki sent Karmal to Prague rather than to Washington.

Once again a traitor

At first, Babrak Karmal was naive enough to count on support from the CPSU. Once in late July 1978 shortly before his departure for Prague, Karmal, Barialay, and Ratebzad (all members of the PDPA Central Committee) unexpectedly arrived, well after the curfew, at the TASS villa and demanded an urgent meeting with Ambassador Puzanov.

The choice of that villa was by no means random. For years it was a venue of secret meetings between Karmal (like Taraki and Amin) and their Soviet contacts acting for the CPSU Central Committee International Affairs Department. Besides, the group wanted to avoid detection by Amin's people, which would have been inevitable if they had called at the embassy.

The news that Karmal was merely a couple of minutes' drive away and demanding a meeting took the ambassador by surprise. Opinions of diplomats from whom he sought advice were divided. The majority, however, thought that Karmal's request was not be ignored. There was no time to ask Moscow's advice. The ambassador let Karmal down once again. Karmal was told that Puzanov was allegedly not in Kabul at the moment. It was a very clumsy lie: the ambassador simply couldn't be away from his embassy at a late hour like that because of the curfew.

Karmal stayed almost all night at the villa where in the past he had confided his political secrets to the CPSU emissaries. The TASS representative left, fatigued by the conversation, and Karmal and two other Afghans just sat there and wallowed in self-pity. They left before dawn, not having met with the person on whom they pinned so much hope.

While the PDPA factions waged war on each other, food prices kept rising

The following morning someone from the embassy staff suggested that Amin be notified about Karmal's night visit to the TASS villa to meet with the Soviet Ambassador, and that the latter refused to see him. Puzanov consented.

Amin didn't seem impressed upon hearing that. "I already know," was his comment. It was possible that Amin's men surveiled Karmal's movements. But it was also possible that it was a bluff on Amin's part. Anyway the ambassador's betrayal was most welcome news to Amin who realized that the Soviets wouldn't interfere with his plans.

The newly-appointed ambassadors received their assignments and went to respective capitals. In anticipation of Amin's all-out attack against the Parchamists, Karmal met with his friends and told them about the danger he foresaw. They agreed upon safe lines of communications between Prague and Kabul, as well as between Kabul and other capitals where the new ambassadors were to be stationed. Karmal's apprehensions proved to be well founded.

KGB dismisses its man's report as false

Following the actual banishment of the Parcham leaders from the country, Amin launched an undisquised attack against that faction, with arrests, torture, and executions.

Those Parchamists who were still at large began to form underground organizations to resist the regime headed by Taraki and Amin. They produced and distributed leaflets denouncing the evil practices of Amin and his secret police, and carried out anti-Amin propaganda by other means.

Amin was aware that the campaign against his government was orchestrated by Babrak Karmal and eventually decided to stricke back at him.

In May 1979, the KGB officer in Afghanistan learned that Amin had ordered a special terrorist group to be dispatched to Prague to assassinate Karmal. The information was leaked from within that group. The informant had been working for Daud's secret police before the revolution and had spied on Parcham's leader. But on his own accord he revealed himself to Karmal and even became the latter's close friend and ideological ally. Amin's men somehow forgot to X-ray the person's political identity, as they had too much work already.

The news was regarded as true beyond doubt and therefore related to the chief of the KGB intelligence, General Kryuchkov, in Moscow. Yet Kryuchkov (judging from his reply to his man in Kabul) dismissed the information as false and a provocation. The KGB officer in Kabul was advised to forget about the matter and to discontinue contacts with the "agent provocateur."

The motives of the KGB intelligence chief are anybody's guess. I suspect that back then he sympathized with Amin and saw Karmal as an unimportant figure in the PDPA's structure, so why bother to help him out? Or perhaps Kryuchkov suspected that Amin might thus be testing Soviet attitudes by means of a provocation.

Some time in June or July 1979 we learned that Czech counterintelligence spotted and neutralized a terrorist group from Afghanistan. They surely let Kryuchkov know about it.

(To be continued)

Photos from the author's archive and the Kabul Times newspaper.

THE PREVIOUS ARTICLE:

it is customary to think that Marx developed a great theory, and we could not put it into practice. But is Marx's theory any good? To give an economic foundation to his political ideas Marx confirms in his "Capital" that production doesn't need entrepreneur and may as well get rid of him. That discovery is what all Marxism hinges on. But is that true? Has it been proven?

About the history of the Great October Socialist Catastrophe

4. The capitalist cadres decide everything

Simon Soloveichik

QUESTIONS NOT ASKED. Socialism was invented by well-to-do people. The rich stood up for the poor so much that the poor ought to put a word in for the rich at least once even if in the interests of the poor.

So Marx thinks that it's not necessary to pay the capitalist for investing his capital – the enterprise can do without him. They gave him back his money, and he takes the profit illegally, not having paid the worker for his surplus labour.

And he doesn't need to be paid for managing – the enterprise can get along without him by hiring managers.

The short but heated argument between the capitalist and the worker on the pages of *Capital* ends on this note, for the resourceful owner cannot come up with any other arguments.

But should that be considered final?

The capitalist-entrepreneur could perhaps have given other arguments or could have asked some more questions. Everyone knows what they are, and Marx must have known about them.

Why didn't the capitalist in *Capital* object, for instance, that he should be paid for the risk? It has already been said that even simple seamstresses setting up a workshop paid the owner her share for taking a risk. For the owner investing his money can lose it all, which often happens to those in his class. If business weren't connected with risk then all people would rush to become capitalists. But this argument isn't brought up because there's no answer to it. And later, Rosa Luxemburg expounding on the objections to Marx, threw out the "for risk" as ridiculous. And there's nothing to discuss – those "defenders of the best of all worlds in which we live" think up all sorts of things to justify the wealth of the capitalist though it is not earned by the sweat of his brow.

But suppose that he shouldn't be paid for risk. After all risk isn't labour.

FROM EACH ACCORDING TO HIS ABILITY. Then, the capitalist could say that he should be paid for his knowledge and ability. Marx writes about the entrepreneur: "With the keen eye of an expert he has selected the means of production and the kind of labour-power best adapted to his particular trade..." Or "But whether the material factors of the process are of normal quality or not, depends not upon the labourer, but entirely upon the capitalist."

But shouldn't this expertise be paid for? There is an old Polish anecdote: the mechanic tapped the car three times with a hammer and the dead engine began to run. "A hundred zlotys," he said to the owner of

Анти КАПИТАЛЪ

the car. "Why so much? You only hit it three times!" The mechanic silently wrote out the receipt: a zloty for each hit and 97 zlotys for knowing where to hit."

But Marx, who declared free development as the final goal in his *Manifesto of the Communist Party* nevertheless didn't recognize the difference in abilities. Ability didn't have any place in his theory of the value of labor. According to his theory the value of the labour power is determined by time and the social need for the product. Difficult work demanding more training is of greater value. Only time is taken into account. What has ability got to do with it?

You can understand Marx: otherwise people won't be equal, otherwise the exclusive role of the proletariat cannot be substantiated or the great theory defended.

In the meantime the first socialist slogan put forward by Saint-Simon was "To each according to his ability; for each ability according to its merit." That's only fair. There's nothing socialist about it, any capitalist would agree. But Marxism couldn't acknowledge pay according to ability, and the slogan was corrected to the well known "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work." That is to take according to ability and to pay according to work. No indulging.

Ability and talent fall out of sight, and together with them imperceptibly disappears the merit of "our friend" the capitalist. For his cares don't produce anything and his time cannot be measured. Like that mechanic he appears to be a loafer and money-monger.

Okay, we'll agree with that, after all ability is only ability. What about work? What is it?

Can the capitalist get in the pay line on payday? Is his name on the list? Has he earned anything?

Remember, according to Marx he doesn't deserve anything. Not a single penny. If you pay him even ten cents for his capitalist labour, then you will have to recognize the nasty bastard's labour and then what will become of class antagonism and the class struggle? And also the proletarian revolution? Who would there be to overthrow?

THIS IS THE SECRET. But the capitalist is occupied with work of great social importance.

Marx denies the entrepreneur the right to exist, for he considers the relationship of the capitalist to the worker only within the walls of one factory, as if there's nothing else around. Then it really does work out that the worker works, the manager manages, while the capitalist appropriates the product of the labour of the people hired by him, taking advantage of the fact that he owns the means of production.

But they are all together. The workers and the capitalist and the factory are all part of society, the market and the national and world economy. If you raise your sights above an individual factory and take a general view, then the picture changes greatly.

At a factory the capitalist can be replaced by the manager and even by the boards of directors (though experience has shown that this doesn't lead to anything good), but in the business overall he is absolutely – I don't know a more emphatic word – irreplaceable.

Here we are finally coming to the main point of this long article.

Here is the labour of the capitalist. This is what demands his ability and why he takes a big personal risk. It is the job of keeping, multiplying and, most important, circulating capital, the whole national wealth, the fruits of the work of great numbers of people.

I don't know what Marx thought, how he looked on this exactly. I'm afraid he didn't think about anything like this at all. It all seemed like unimportant details of a distant future. Some people, having gathered together, would manage the economy and decide where to build and what to produce. And exclusively in the interests of the people, and not capital and the capitalists. That's it. And why not? Is that bad?

No it's not. It's even good if you don't take into consideration that it's contrary to the nature of things.

This is where utopia lurks. Self-deception, which, under the influence of many factors, turns into the deception of millions of people. Here is the theory, decked out in scientific garb, all very large and evoking not so much respect as amazement at the erudition, all the scientific detail and scrupulousness, and so attractive that it can deceive people. And here all unnoticeably slides into the chasm of unreality.

This is so because how the national wealth will be used, how much will be preserved, how much profit there will be and, in the long run, what benefit it will bring to the people and all who work depends on the capitalist looking after his own selfish interests. So his function in a natural way, not depending on any person, is passed on to those with the best business sense. Otherwise the country would go bankrupt, there would be a depression and the people would become poor.

The capitalist cadres decide everything.

The government also can amass huge amounts of capitals, having fleeced its people. But no one besides the private entrepreneur is in a position to handle the wealth in such a way that it grows. The nature of the economy and economics demands that people having wealth constantly do (worked!) their utmost, reaching the highest limit of human ability. They work thus only when the fear of losing their property hangs over their heads. Property is the reward for the capitalist, and property is the whip. If you take away an entrepreneur's property and he no longer fears losing it, the punishment is a bad economy. And the mere desire for profit isn't enough. Make them officials disposing other's property and even if you shoot them for failures they won't do anything. If you take away their property neither desire not fear will help.

Desire attracts, fear drives, and ability reaches its limit and business thrives. If a mistake is made it'll go to the other owner. The whole system of capitalism, as distinguished from what preceded it, hinges on this union of the economy with the most talented business people, while weeding out those who are unfit, lazy, limited, or failures. That's how the capitalist economy could accomplish in several centuries what otherwise would have taken several millenia. That's why the great economists of the past thought that the capitalist system was the only right one, that it was normal and natural.

The Belgium historian Henri Pirenne revealed that the bourgeoisie isn't just one class, that you can always see in it the conflict between the traditionalists and their successors on the one hand and the innovators on the other. So from time to time there is a generation of newly rich. And in one or two generations their sons rise out of the battle and turn into monied aristocrats. They are vanquished by the new rich who don't have anything but wits and agressiveness.

Most likely that's how the economy moves in history. It's not the fight between labour and capital until the annihilation of capital and labour as Marx thought. The technology changes, the productivity of labour changes, the type of entrepreneur changes, the relations between labour and capital changes and the profit may be divided differently, but the essence of the system remains the same for one and only one reason: the owner is in charge of the

economy. Otherwise, sooner or later, it will collapse.

WHAT IS GOING ON? WHERE IS THE EXPLOITATION? An auto plant is built and it manufactures cars. Whose sweat is it? Whose labour?

The workers'. But how much work of the labourer makes up the price of the car? The work of the designer, the manager, the bookkeeper, and finally the entrepreneur is also in it... Yes the worker bent his back at the lathe, but that doesn't mean that the car was made only by his hands, that he has the right to the whole product and that he is the key person. Then the unskilled labourer should be tops because his work is the hardest. In contemporary works on economics it is proven that in the post-manufactory period capitalism – contrary to Marx – does not exploit the workers and that the main value is created not by the workers hands, but by mental work – organization and mechanization. But we saw in the example of Vera Pavlovna's workshop that even at the very early stages that's the way it was. Marx's statement that the capitalist appropriates unpaid labour wasn't even true in his time.

Does the capitalist get a disproportionate share? But who ought to get the most in a country if not the one on whom the well being of the people depends? A singer?

Of course the capitalist lives in luxury, and some, especially the new rich, with their brazen mugs ride around with a bussy in a Mercedes (see NT No.37), hate to see that. But the illness of inequality remains. Is the only way out to bankrupt the country in order to get rid of the jerk in the Mercedes?

It's worth mentioning that if you lumped together the pay of all the officials who replaced the work of one capitalist after the socialization of property, it'd probably come out to be much more that the personal expenses of the exploiter living in luxury.

SO, WHAT CONCLUSION IS TO BE DRAWN? It turns out that there is no capitalist exploitation. What were the workers freed from in October 1917?

But the matter shouldn't be oversimplified.

Marx was noted for his ability with dialectics. He saw the dual nature in everything. He discovered, for instance, that turning money into capital is done within the sphere of circulation and outside of it. But each time when speaking about the relations between labour and capital, it was as if his skill at dialectics evaporated. He persistently saw only one side of the complex phenomena.

From the point of view of the worker, the capitalist could seem to be an exploiter, since he really doesn't pay fully. but otherwise where would the money come from to expand production, for new enterprises and a luxurious life? These very means develop the national economy and in the long run raise the standard of living of the people.

The capitalist only follows his own selfish goals, he thirsts for profit, but his egoistical interests for the most part correspond to the interests of the people. André Gide, who came to our country in 1936 and saw that here you had to take what was handed out, that there's a problem even with elementary necessities, wrote: "Now, in spite of all my anti-capitalistic leanings, I think about those people at home, from the large industrialist to the small businessman, who are driven by one thought, what more ways can be thought up to satisfy the people?"

The capitalist, so to speak, is the personification of inequality. But only with his efforts does this inequality gradually even out.

The capitalist is stingy, his only interest is money, but it is he who is doing something important. He is preserving the nations property and he maintains the work ethic.

The capitalist is wealthy, but this wealth permits him to pay for the works of great artists, to build beautiful cities, to develop science and to give to charity.

He is an individualist, but he is an organizer of the collective work of many people, sometimes several thousand.

He has private property, but it both belongs to him and does not. In Paris each house is owned by someone, but who owns Paris? France, the French Republic.

Marx went all out to show the negative side of capitalism, but didn't want to see the positive side of the role of the entrepreneur as someone constructive and creative. Why?

WHY? While writing this article I constantly asked myself: why did Marx so persistently refuse to see the obvious? Was it a mistake, a misunderstanding or perhaps scientific fudging?

Many people saw the absurdity of communism. Mikhail Bakunin way back in 1847 called it theoretical madness, and wrote about Marx: "In one word it's a lie and nonsense, nonsense and a lie. In this society it is impossible to breathe freely and deeply. I won't have anything to do with it and won't join their communist union of traders and don't want to have anything to do with them."

I think the French historian Lucien Febvre (his excellent book *Combats pour l'histoire*) explained it best of all. He greatly respected Marx, but wrote that there was the sense of being a prophet in him. And the prophet knows only his truth. It fills him. He doesn't see anything else but it. He asserts it, and proclaims it with such force and persistence that people are convinced, attracted, and submit to it..."

A prophet and a revolutionary. Friedrich Engels said at the grave of his friend: ... Marx was before all else a revolutionist. His real mission in life was to contribute, in one way or another, to the overthrow of capitalist society and of the state institutions which it had brought into being, to contribute to the liberation of the modern proletariat, which he was the first to make conscious of its own position and its needs, conscious of the conditions of its emancipation period. Fighting was his element."

A prophet, a revolutionary, a fighter – maybe that's not bad. But these qualities are absolutely worthless when it comes to objective scientific research on social reality. First Marx became a communist, and only later got into economic research to prove the ideas and stands also known to him.

But a prophet is a prophet. The revolutionary ideas were dear to many and passion irrevocably gripped them. The 16th of August, 1867, at 2 a.m. Marx finished proofreading the first volume of *Capital* – all 1225 pages. And March 27, 1872, the first translation in a foreign language – Russian – came out. As they say – "they were the first."

We often read nowadays that Marx was not understood properly, that there can be an alternative interpretation of his works, that *Capital* is not a multi-volume call for the expropriation of expropriators with the help of a rifle, that it is not capitalism that reigns in America today, but a socialized property genially foreseen by Marx. They are prepared to go any lengths to protect the sacred name. They call it respect for the past.

But Marx is no past, Marxism is malaise, a gutting fire, a disaster.

In two months a thousand copies of *Capital* had been sold in Russian, a third of its printing. The fire of communism was tossed into our country.

The World Paper

It's easy to do business with "the haves." But how do you sell goods and services to people who have no money? The authors of the American newspaper *The World Paper* offer some useful advice

People make money, but as we all know, or may have learned from the novels of Honoré de Balzac, money also creates people.

In a socialist country, where I lived for many years, it was cash above all, cash *über alles* – no investments, no real estate, no stocks, no checks, just cash. A dominant personality created by the system was "Homo sovieticus," an idealized product of communism described by Soviet dissident and professor of logic, Aleksander Zinowiew.

Homo sovieticus was a person with no material needs, a person who felt that he need not bother trying to acquire anything because the omnipotent state would provide. Thus, he didn't need to own anything but his party card. According to the noted Polish Catholic intellectual, Father Jozef Tischner, Homo sovieticus was the product of total negation of private property; property being the source of all evil, including exploitation and alienation. He who had more was suspect.

A Polish poet recalled in her memoirs that she was ousted from the Communist Youth Organization because a comrade spotted a white phone in her home. "My father found it in the ruins of Warsaw after the war," she defended herself, but her protests did not help. A white phone was a symbol of bourgeois mentality. Whoever owned anything but the basic minimum constantly had to justify it, to explain it at the tax office, customs office, party committee, school meetings, etc.

All this was supposed to

combat egoism, but the result was quite the opposite. Homo sovieticus, despite the urgings of the state, liked a spacious, convenient apartment, comfortable furniture, a color TV, vacations and perhaps even a car or a summer cottage. But how could one own and not own at the same time? How could Homo sovieticus own without the comrades knowing that he owned?

Soon, Homo sovieticus figured out that cash could be used to solve some of these dilemmas. Cash could be passed from hand to hand without a trace. Cash was easy to hide. Cash was the source of a good mood: one owned it, possessed it, could feel its warmth in a pocket, where nobody else could see it.

All this created a cash-oriented personality that dealt only in cash, avoided banks and financial institutions, didn't trust checks, would not buy or sell on credit and trusted only money, not people. It is an enduring legacy for most Poles. An Israeli newspaper recently reported that a Polish millionaire who bought half of an Israeli oil company arrived to conclude the deal with a suitcase containing US$35 million – cash.

When Homo sovieticus arrived in the cashless society of the US, the first thing he noticed was countless banks everywhere. In big metropolises and small towns, from Citibank in New York City to Cambridge Trust in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the taller and more impressive the building, the greater the possibility it is a bank.

In a cashless society, the richer the person, the less cash is carried in his or her wallet. A Homo sovieticus wallet contained an ID, driver's license, party ticket and local currency at the front with hard currency tucked away beneath a picture of the wife and kids. An American middle-class wallet contains an ID, several credit cards and a few dollar bills. That's all.

But why so many banks when there is so little cash being circulated? During one of my first walks in New York City, I saw a pianist playing a piano in a bank lobby, obviously to attract customers. A piano in a bank? This country must be crazy.

Something must be wrong – and something *is* wrong. Homo sovieticus, with his dollar savings brought from the Old Country, goes to rent a car. He is asked if he has "a major credit card."

"No, but I do have cash," says Homo sovieticus, defending himself because he is a foreigner and afraid he might be taken for a crook who wants to steal the car. He shows his cash, big and small bills that were carefully concealed in a money belt or in a bra all the way from Eastern Europe, past Polish and East German customs officers, Frankfurt airport thieves and new neighbors in Brooklyn.

Gradually, Homo sovieticus learns that his beloved cash is not as powerful as it was back in Romania, Bulgaria or Czechoslovakia. Buying airline tickets, renting a car, or any dealings done over the phone cannot be done without a credit card. It is a kind of internal passport to the society, a ticket from the community of have-nots to the society of the haves.

But the biggest surprise to Homo sovieticus is that with a credit card he can buy even if he has no money, buy on credit. Back in the Old Country, one first had to save to spend. In the US, a cashless society, it is the other way around.

In the beginning of the century, companies competing for a larger share of the market were trying to solve the puzzle of how to sell goods and services to people with no money. It was easy to sell to the haves, but what about the have-nots? How could they tempt people into buying their products on credit? The credit card, the birth of which has progressed into a buy-now, pay-later mentality, has become the American Way.

In Poland you were a prisoner of the state, a prisoner of the system. But here, you gradually become the property of your bank, which has underwritten a lifestyle beyond your means. Someone has to pay for it, and once you allow your banks to co-finance your lifestyle, you sell your soul to it for the 18 percent monthly interest that the bank charges. Computers, phones, electronic checking devices, carbon papers, the entire impressive infrastructure necessary for credit cards is the new bureaucracy replacing the state and police of the Old Country.

Visa alone has over 260 million cardholders. Add American Express, MasterCard, AT&T, Mobil, many other cards and millions of cardholders, each ringing up an average of US$1, 100 monthly, and you get an idea of what a cashless society really is.

It is another form of enslavement, but I must admit that it is much better than the one Homo sovieticus knew in his own country. At least it is not supported by police and it rests on temptation rather than coercion.

Daniel Passent
Boston, USA

No payment, no secrets in Filipino *sari-sari* stores

Long before the almighty credit card swept the modern world, credit transactions were taking place in rural Philippines, in the so-called *sari-sari* stores (variety or provision shops) that antedate today's convenience stores. Then, credit was without formalities, it was only based on trust, an old-fashioned value which laid the foundation for what has now become, in modern times, a risk-prone deal.

Money rarely changes hands in very remote rural communities on some Philippine islands. There is little cash to go around in these small farming and fishing towns. Intimate knowledge of neighbors and the rest of the community's residents – their personal backgrounds and earning capacities – makes for trusting relationships and easy, cashless transactions.

Many of these deals take place in neighborhood *sari-sari* stores. They sell everything that one needs in normal times as well as during emergencies, from rice and eggs to charcoal and pain relievers. Items can be bought in packs or piecemeal; transactions can be as small as a single cigarette, half a liter of kerosene or two candles to last an evening's darkness. Electricity in these parts is unknown.

Credit is welcome. Fishermen who buy coffee, shortening, rum, vinegar, pepper or bananas on credit, later pay with their catch. Farmers pay with their vegetables and crops and prices are subject to haggling.

No promissory notes are signed for these credit transactions. Store owners merely make a list of the purchases on wall calendars, sheets of paper tucked into

When a Broad View Is Taken, the World's Food Problems Don't Seem So Big

In some parts of our world, there is hunger. In other parts, there is abundance. The solution lies in taking a global perspective. At the Archer Daniels Midland Company, we've built a worldwide processing and transportation network that gets food from where it's grown to where it's needed as efficiently as possible. And that goes a long way toward bringing the world's food problems down to size.

ADM

wallets or notebooks. In earlier times, credit transactions were recorded on a wooden post, with chalk.

Gilda Cordero-Fernando, book publisher and noted chronicler of popular culture, wrote that making one's credit public knowledge served as a form of social control. "When a list was getting pretty kilometric, the whole neighborhood knew it. A bulletin-style listing was also to show the customer that he was not being cheated."

Even more financially comfortable residents, such as a major, a small entrepreneur or a ricefield owner, bought from the stores. Thus, Cordero-Fernando called the *sari-sari* store a "great leveler" because "everybody but everybody bought from them."

Historical accounts show that *sari-sari* stores were already thriving in the 1880s, located in provinces that produced export crops. At that time, they were already a source of credit and crop advances to farmers, Cordero-Fernando's research points out. The stores bought crops like tobacco, rice and hemp wholesale to sell to foreign exporters.

Bigger and better *sari-sari* stores then were owned by Chinese immigrants to the Philippines. Through sheer industry, they earned more and had more capital to invest. The Chinese also helped their compatriots set up their own retail trade businesses by lending them money.

Today, *sari-sari* stores have other uses. In feudal settings, such as agricultural estates and vast landholdings in provinces, the store is part of an exploitative setup. Owned by the landlord, the store adds unsurious interest charges to prices of goods bought on credit. In sharecropping arrangements, payments for these mounts are deducted from the already overburdened tenants' harvests.

In some towns big business is run by one family that dominates the town's politics, too. Either the mayor or congressman, or even both, may belong to the same family. With ease, they operate an expanded *sari-sari* store among other businesses, which they use to dispense favors to earn a debt of gratitude from the voting populace: school teachers, farmers, housewives and town hall employees all buy on credit.

Still, the *sari-sari* store, without the vested interest, is a sturdy Filipino institution that has modestly served every rural community's needs.

Marites Danguilan-Vitug
Manila, Philippines

Europe's house of cards

Like it or not, plastic money is now part of most people's lives. Europe is rapidly catching up with the United States in the array of payment cards offered event though the Continental appetite for plastic varies from country to country.

By the end of last year, Europeans carried about 200 million plastic cards with them and this number will probably double within five years. They come in different colors and with different brand names but the purpose is the same: to make spending easier.

The choice of plastic is often bewildering, particularly as their functions vary. Credit cards were the first to appear in Europe, followed by charge cards such as American Express and Diners Club. Charge cards offer no credit; at least in theory the amount due must be paid promptly on receipt of a statement.

The latest arrival in Europe is the debit card, a convenient alternative to payment by cash or check. Banking industry experts predict that the debit card will soon put the checkbook out of existence, but this may be premature. Not all Europeans like the idea of their bank accounts being debited directly.

The pattern of card behavior changes from country to country, as any European traveler will confirm. Until very recently, debit, not credit cards were the norm in France and they still make up the majority. Spain, on the other hand, has taken to credit in a big way and ranks second only to the UK in terms of cards in circulation.

Earlier this year, Barclays Bank, one of the UK's biggest, threw down the gauntlet to the big German banks by launching a new credit card in Germany that will be accepted in over 300,000 outlets. The domestic banks privately recognize that they will have to rise to this challenge.

Throughout the EC, competition in the plastic card market is heating up. As rivalry among the card-issuing companies intensifies, the demarcation lines around their products are fading. Visa, which has over 50 million European cardholders in its system, is now barely distinguishable from its smaller competitor, MasterCard.

Non-European competitors approaching saturation in their home markets are looking to Europe for more cardholders. American Express, which already has around five million charge cards in Europe, now offers its Optima credit card in France and the UK. JCB, the Japanese card issuer, is also eyeing the European market.

But the plastic boom has its drawbacks. Before the current recession hit some parts of Europe, notably the UK, banks were happy to raise credit limits for their clients at will. Now, those same banks are staring at a rising tide of bad debts as cardholders find they cannot repay.

Some individuals are increasingly confused by the galaxy of cards on offer. Although most issuing banks now belong to a particular group with its own brand label, there are still enough different names in Europe to perplex even the most seasoned traveler.

This confusion will disappear over the next decade as card issuers harmonize their various products throughout Europe much as they have already done in the US. The advent of a single market in Western Europe will lead to as simpler system whereby most cards are accepted by most banks.

Experts predict that use of payment cards will continue to grow rapidly. The opening up of the former Soviet-bloc countries will expand the number of outlets for cards.

In the UK, which has the highest number of cards per capita in Europe, debit card transactions are rising sharply. They reached over 500,000 a day last year and, according to one industry study, may exceed eight million a day by the turn of the century.

But Europe's appetite for plastic may never quite match that of the US. Cash remains king in many countries and some retailers offer a discount to buyers if they use cash rather than a credit card. Europeans no longer keep gold under the mattress, but they do like those high-denomination notes.

Nigel Adam
London, UK

Introduced by *New Times* analyst **Rostislav Zolotaryov**

Not so long ago we published under this headline excerpts from a book by American socialist Michael Harrington (*NT* No. 11/91). There are two main theses expounded in the book. First, socialism is an ethical system par excellence which helps carry out reforms that eventually transform social relations radically. Second, the entire experience of "radical socialism" and Bolshevism not only has failed to actualize the socialist ideal, it has compromised the very idea of socialism. Hence Harrington's and other socialists' conclusion: if the theory and practice of socialist movement is perfected, everything will proceed smoothly. This is tantamount to saying that the idea as such was nice, it is only a matter of finding the "right" way to implement it. Certainly, there remains room for doubt since the criteria of the "right" are too arbitrary. So today our readers can learn the opinion of Michael Harrington's permanent opponent Michael Novak.

Michael Novak belongs to an ideological and political trend which was formed in the United States in the 1970s and was termed "neoconservatism." The "neoconservatives" participated in the activities of associations close to the Democratic Party, but later some of them supported Republican candidates in elections and even worked in the Republican Administration. The "neoconservatives" grouped around the magazines *The Public Interest* and *Commentary* and contributed to the work of such "think tanks" as the Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute.

Michael Novak (born 1933) belongs to the junior generation of the "neoconservatives." Like Harrington, he is of Catholic descent and was a socialist sympathizer in his younger years, but, having become disappointed in this idea, took a liberal democratic stance. And since the spectrum of political views in the country sharply shifted to the left in the 1960s, Novak and those who shared the same ideas turned out to be to the right of the centre and their convictions acquired a conservative hue.

The circle of Novak's ideas is rather close to that specific to European ideologists of the Christian Democratic trend. According to one of their theses, strengthening of the regulating principle and centralization in society objectively leads to deformation of social links and to enslaving people. The "regulating centre" is personified in the "new class" (the term, evidently borrowed from Milovan Djilas) – a class of state and social servants – whose interest in regulating institutions runs counter to the principle of freedom and makes their declarations about their "concern for the people's welfare" rather dubious. These are precisely the mottos voiced by socialists and the "friends of the people" who, consciously or otherwise, actually defend their claims to leadership.

FROM THE XXth CENTURY POLITICAL THOUGHT

Socialism as highmindedness

Michael Novak

Two features in recent socialist thought are quite fascinating. First, socialists seem to be in retreat both from theory and from program. A favourite new word is "nondoctrinaire." This may be regarded as disillusionment with doctrine. Secondly, socialists seem to have retreated to the safer ground of moral ideals: about poverty, inequality, and the priority of meeting human needs democratically. One might be tempted to think of socialists as admirable persons who are only voicing ideals quite compatible with democratic capitalism. Why not give them credit for being representatives of the idealism any humane society needs?

In thinking of socialism as a kind of political religion, or perhaps more exactly as a political-economic expression of Jewish-Christian ideals, I tended to give socialists credit for pure idealism. Capitalism might be justified because it works better, but – I tended to agree – it represents an inferior ideal. The notion that an unworkable ideal is a morally acceptable ideal, however, troubled me. If an ideal doesn't work, isn't that evidence that it is out of touch with human reality? Isn't that a sign that it is a false ideal?

In this respect, socialism is unlike Judaism and Christianity. Jews and Christians quite expect this world to be a world of sin. When they entertain images of "the Kingdom of God," they quite properly recognize the transcendence of the Kingdom. They recognize it as a vision and do not expect any earthly institution to embody it fully. Socialism cannot easily accept such realism. The moment socialism allows itself to be judged by realistic criteria, it loses its cachet as a special form of idealism. It becomes simply a competing political economy, to be judged empirically, on its record. If socialism is only a competing political and economic theory, it has no special standing as a kind of secular religion.

Yet it is as a kind of religion that socialists most often justify their beliefs. Seldom do they claim that the superiority of socialism lies in its works, its practicality, its proven fruits. Nearly always they justify it in terms of its vision. Quite commonly, socialists are prepared to admit that democratic capitalism is more productive, more efficient, and far less vicious in practice than socialist theory would lead one to expect; in short, it works better. They rest the case for socialism on its supposed moral superiority over democratic capitalism.

Since nearly everybody interprets the logic of democratic capitalism as inherently less moral than that of socialism, honest persons are often troubled by a "paradox." Democratic capitalism, they think, ought not to bear moral fruit; yet it does. This "paradox" arrested Jacques Maritain: "This industrial civilization, which I had learned to know in Europe, appeared to me, here, both as gigantically developed (like many things transplanted from Europe over here) and as a kind of ritual dedicated to some foreign goddess. Its inner logic, as I knew it – originally grounded as it was on the principle of the fecundity of money and the absolute primacy of the individual profit – was, everywhere in the world, inhuman and materialist. But, by a strange

paradox, the people who lived and toiled under this structure or ritual of civilization were keeping their own souls apart from it. At least as regards the essentials, their souls and vital energy, their dreams, their everyday effort, their idealism and generosity, were running against the grain of the inner logic of the superimposed structure. They were freedom-loving and mankind-loving people, people clinging to the importance of ethical standards, anxious to save the world, the most humane and the least materialist among modern peoples which had reached the industrial stage."

Yet the nub of this so-called paradox lies in the socialist interpretation of reality. On the premises of democratic capitalism, the happy outcome reported by Maritain and Revel was to be expected. It was, after all, the outcome predicted by the designers of the experiment. Only on the premises of socialism does it come as a surprise. Furthermore, in the days when I thought socialism represented a moral ideal, socialism required of me no special moral heroism. In the fields of literature, religion, and journalism, moreover, a socialist ideology offers higher status and acclaim... Among the more highly educated, however, and in the dominant literary circles, socialists are afforded moral prestige even by those too realistic to share their views in full... In order to keep one's moral credentials straight, one had only to keep well informed about the latest line of advanced socialist thinking – on busing, crime, affirmative action, sex, and every other issue of the day. In order to help shape the radical consensus, one needed only the wit to draw out the implications for current affairs of socialist premises. Leadership in socialism comes easily enough to the logically rigorous. Since the future is said to belong to socialism, and since advantage accrues to the avant-garde, it is not costly to employ socialism for "critical distance." Since realists tend to become mired in the messiness of facts, they do not seem to be as ideologically reliable and as morally pure as idealists. The socialist world is predominantly literary. It is far easier to organize words on paper than to organize workable programs in reality.

When I finally decided, on reflection, that I preferred the ideals of democratic capitalism and could not be a democratic socialist, it was at first by considering what works. I was repelled, secondly, by the sense of moral superiority socialism afforded. Finally, I began to reflect upon flaws not only in its practice but also in its theory...

Under democratic capitalism, individuals, parties, and institutions may work effectively to relieve the suffering of the poor; to try to diminish inequalities of wealth and power through various checks and balances, schemes of redistribution, and legal reforms; and to make the meeting of basic human needs a higher priority than economic growth and the production of goods. A democratic capitalist may, within the system, work for and even achieve all these things. Indeed, others with other priorities are also free to choose what they will work for.

By contrast, democratic socialism has an inherent tendency to impose one set of moral injunctions upon all, even at the expense of other moral injunctions. To be sure, socialist thought assumes that its goals are in harmony with what humans universally desire, and thus does not think of itself as coercive. Yet it does tend to define its opponents as greedy, selfish, oppressive, and hostile to the poor. Such moralism fuels its historical tendency toward coercive behavior and sectarian schism. Furthermore, since the socialist ideal is presented as an international ideal, with claims that go beyond those of historical institutions, it tends to teach individuals to loathe their own societies. It feeds on the adversarial spirit and has made common cause with "the adversary culture" of literary modernism.

Obvious dangers lurk in socialism's main injunctions. First, there is the danger of applying them one-sidedly, so as to create a monstrous government, especially when the injunction to respect the limits of government does not appear to be given equal moral force. Second, there is the danger that "some" loss of aggregate goods and services may be so great as to bring about economic stagnation and decline. Since an impoverished nation has little flexibility in alleviating the lot of its unemployed, its handicapped and its poor, such loss might place in jeopardy the basic legitimacy of democratic governance, by intensifying the resentments of citizens whose futures show little promise of betterment. Third, there is the danger that attempts to alleviate poverty by a direct and supposedly rational plan may seriously misconstrue the causes of the wealth of nations.

Democratic socialism has an inherent tendency to impose one set of moral injunctions upon all, even at the expense of other moral injunctions

Democratic capitalism has a rather different way of understanding and fulfilling its goals. Through its political system, democratic capitalism allows for governmental action in alleviating poverty, enhancing the liberty of all and fulfilling basic needs. Yet it is deeply concerned lest government overstep its limits and become itself a threat worse than the injuries it sets out to redress. In practice, the limits to be imposed on government may be difficult to discern in advance. Yet the danger of tyranny is great, all the more so when the enlargement of government is made to seem legitimate through appeal to moral principle.

The threat to liberty of action, as socialists see it, arises primarily from "great inequalities of wealth between different social groups." But at least an equal threat arises from the creation of a corrupt, arrogant and indecipherable government. Furthermore, the principle that all social groups ought to be equal in power and freedom of action cannot be served through the enlargement of government, unless that government is staffed by angels. For the accrual of all powers necessary to enforce equality gives to government officials unequal power. Who will govern government? To assert that a democratically elected people will control bureaucracies is to ignore fundamental problems of governability, and not least the nature of bureaucracies. To rest the hopes of liberty on the ability of bureaucracies to adjudicate the economic power of discrete groups of citizens is to trust bureaucrats more than common sense allows.

Furthermore, socialists' implicit principle of equal freedom of action for all runs against the grain of nature. Persons without an ear for music will never have equal freedom of action in matters musical, and those who cannot master elementary logic will never gain equal power in departments of philosophy... It stands to reason that in economic activities persons are likewise of unequal talent. Those of

lesser talent (whether of mind, instinct or energy) are not likely to gain equal economic power and equal freedom of economic action.

By contrast, democratic capitalists hold that *every* person of talent – musical, intellectual, economic – should have every opportunity to discover and to develop his talents. They hold, further, that natural and developed inequalities enhance the common good of all. Societies without artistic and intellectual genius are poorer in every part for such a lack, and so are societies without economic genius. In traditional societies, in which neither equal opportunity nor social mobility is operative, existing inequalities of wealth, status and hierarchical allocation seem to block the rise of new and superior talent. In both traditional and socialist societies, democratic capitalists perceive real offenses against the common good.

Western civilization is possible because it has triumphed over envy. It did so largely through the invention of the market. Exchange in markets requires trust – trust in society's future, trust in the stability of the currency, trust in credit extended, and trust in goods received. It also requires information about the needs of others, for each exchange is other-regarding as well as self-regarding. Where markets exist, information about the needs of others is direct and simple. Where markets do not exist, distant authorities must speculate about needs and assign them rankings. Exchange relations are more fully human than relations of dependency. For this reason, markets take for granted (and promote) elementary equalities and, where such equalities do not exist, slowly generate them. Democratic socialists conclude from this slowness that markets should be abridged in favour of governmental action. In principle, democratic capitalists do not oppose governmental action, but judge it according to whether it generates equalities which bring newcomers into markets or whether it generates dependency. They believe the first course promotes voluntariness, while the second is dangerous and less than moral.

If an ideal doesn't work, isn't that evidence that it is out of touch with human reality?

Simply as an idea, furthermore, at least in already free societies, socialism has a great rhetorical advantage over liberalism. While liberal thinkers struggle to be practical and realistic, socialist thinkers enjoy the superior power of general ideas. In nation after nation, socialism has first taken root chiefly among that class of general thinkers who comment on everything, who are themselves in need of large general ideas and a vision of an ideal future. In already free societies, socialism has been in competition, not with a contrasting democratic capitalistic ideal, but with an existing state of affairs. Thus, a very large body of persons whose expertise lies in retailing new ideas to their constituencies – chaplains, ministers, college presidents, heads of foundations, news reporters, magazine writers, consultants, advisers of every sort – finds in socialism a general framework by which to claim originality and critical distance. Those who are socialist in their thinking acquire the prestige that accrues to those in possession of coherent general theories about the future, by comparison with which liberal ideas seem tepid. Socialism thus brings with it intellectual prestige not available to democratic capitalist ideas. It offers the framework for nearly all general thinking outside narrow specialities, so that persons who try to stay abreast of current ideas must, of necessity, think in mainly socialist categories. Those who use democratic capitalist ideas carry the burden of existing evils, conflicts and perplexities, and are easily made to seem, by comparison, on the defensive.

My reasons for finding it difficult to follow democratic socialists into thinking of participatory democracy as a universal remedy for worldly ills may be succinctly stated. First, participatory democracy is not an appropriate method for reaching most decisions in the moral-cultural realm, whether in religion, morals, the arts, or literature. In such matters there are intrinsic standards. Second, it is not an appropriate method for reaching most decisions in the economic realm. Neither invention nor economic management, neither personal responsibility on the job nor personal choices in consumption are best adjudicated by a vote in committee. Third, participatory democracy requires too many meetings, and it suits neither the needs of most citizens nor the purposes of a free society. Some persons *do* like to "participate in all the decisions that affect their lives." But most persons have as little to do with politics as they can. The right to pursue happiness means, for them, the right to fix elected decision makers with a disapproving eye from time to time, while getting on with the attractions of living.

It is unlikely that any society in history has ever given rise to so many associations, committees and action groups as that of democratic capitalism in the United States, and it is not evident that democratic socialism means more than improving upon what already exists. Insofar as it does so, it advances democratic capitalism. But insofar as it strengthens the administrative state, it is a version of statism. Insofar as it abolishes private property and business corporations, it renders citizens the more defenseless against the economic power of the bureaucratic state. Concerned about the disproportionate powers of big business, democratic socialism leaves citizens vulnerable to the disproportionate power of the state.

Finally, democratic socialism trades upon imagery according to which all things private – like businesses and markets – are selfish, greedy and corrupt, while it neglects even to study the historical record of the selfishness, greed and corruption of bureaucracies (whether of church or of state) which in the past and the present have claimed to speak for the public. Liberalism arose as a defence of individuals against church and state. Claiming to go beyond liberalism, democratic socialists have created the greatest administrative state power in human history. They have been willfully ignorant about the corruption of entire populations through total dependence upon the state.

Democracy depends for its legitimacy not so much upon equality of results as upon a belief among even the least well off that things will get better for them. The legitimacy of democracy rests upon economic growth and the pervasive optimism it generates. In giving economic growth too low a priority, democratic socialism has contributed mightily to making democracies increasingly ungovernable and to destroying their real legitimacy. Thus democratic socialism is not only a romantic illusion. It destroys the very thing it means to save.

Fifty-five-year-old deputy chairman of the Moscow City Soviet, **Yuri Sedykh-Bondarenko**, and his 12 comrades are staging a hunger strike. At first, the deputy protested against the Moscow mayor's decision to appoint Sergei Krasavchenko, an economist, head of the Moscow police. Sedykh-Bondarenko likewise disapproves of Arkady Murashov, a physicist, and believes that this post should be held by General Vyacheslav Komissarov, who was appointed as far back as last January, but has never assumed his office.

In April Sedykh-Bondarenko and his friends went on an earlier hunger strike for the same reason, but the then Minjster of Internal Affairs Boris Pugo showed no concern about the deputies' health: General Nikolai Myrikov was commissioned to head the Moscow police. Following the abortive coup in August and Myrikov's resignation, justice should have triumphed, but this time Gavriil Popov was against Komissarov's candidature.

A professional lawyer, Sedykh-Bondarenko has worked for 25 years in police bodies and now holds the rank of colonel. For the past few years he has been lecturing at the Academy of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The organizer of the hunger strike considers the present Moscow leaders his political opponents. In the spring election for the city mayor he voted against the Popov-Luzhkov team and tried to nominate Tatyana Koryagina, who is well known for her radical views. Sedykh-Bondarenko accuses the Moscow mayor of striving for authoritarianism and of disregarding the deputies' opinion.

Sedykh-Bondarenko says that a hunger strike is an "extreme measure" and does not advise anyone to resort to it in order to solve disputed questions, until all "parliamentary methods of struggle" have been tried and have failed.

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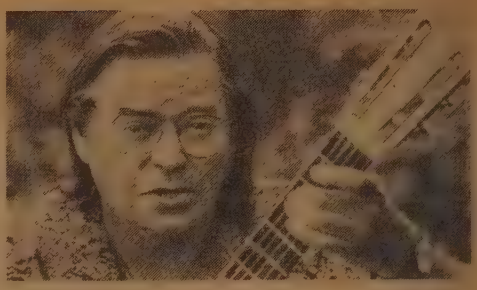
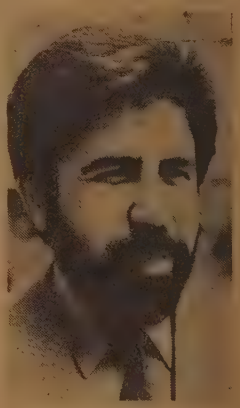


The name of the 64-year-old Brazilian composer **Antonio Carlos Jobim** has been inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in New York City. Jobim has written more than 600 songs, most of which have become classics and are performed in many different languages.

His songs have been played so often that the composer calls himself "million-aired." His greatest hits – *One Note Samba* and *The Girls from Ipanema* have been recorded by everyone from Cher and Astrud Gilberto to Nancy Wilson and Ella Fitzgerald.

The "Boss of bossa nova," as Jobim is called deferentially, reacted to this with his usual modesty: "If you stick around long enough, you will die with a chest covered with medals."

* * *



Thirty-four-year-old **Toshpulat Tozhiddinov** has founded, and become the head of a Popular Academy of Culture and Universal Human Values. According to Tozhiddinov, the aim of this international non-governmental organization is to "enable the peoples of all the republics to develop their best spiritual qualities." Toshpulat believes that it is impossible to reach these goals unless different nationalities maintain cultural ties with each other. That is why students of the Moscow-based Spiritual Heritage Centre under the Academy will study not only Islam, but also Christianity, Buddhism and Judaism.

The Popular Academy

Tolerance leads to a compromise

Two years ago, 35-year-old **Heinrich Martens** bought an issue of *New Times* magazine and read in the "People" column about the Revival national society of Soviet Germans and its Chairman Heinrich Grout. Martens, who was going to emigrate to Germany "because of the lack of any prospects for Soviet Germans and the Bolshevist dominance in the USSR," decided to postpone his departure. He found the chairman of the Revival society, joined the Soviet Germans' movement, and recently founded a Union in Support of Soviet Germans' Culture. He also heads the Union.

Heinrich Martens graduated from the Polytechnical Institute in Donetsk as a mining engineer. He worked with a geological prospecting group in the Donbass mines and then as a scientific worker at a research institute. Martens describes his political views as "between Christian Democrats and Social Democrats."

The Union's activities, according to Martens, are aimed at restoring the national culture and spiritual wealth of Soviet Germans, waking their national awareness and raising money to finance numerous programmes. Training of teachers for German-language schools and work on elaborating the concepts of new manuals are among the first projects drawn out by the Union. However, Heinrich realizes that it will be very difficult, perhaps next to impossible, to carry out the above-mentioned projects, because of the economic and political crisis in the country.

Heinrich Martens and the Union occupy the centrist position in the national German movement and pursue no political aims. He is concerned over the confrontation between the two irreconcilable wings of the Soviet Germans' movement. The supporters of radical measures, headed by the Revival society, are calling for an immediate restoration of the autonomous German republic on the Volga, whereas the adherents of the Germans of the USSR Union set up on the money raised by the CC CPSU, come out for more moderate, bureaucratic ways of solving the problem. They would rather form a government without a territory. Heinrich hopes that the tolerance advocated by his Union would lead both wings to a compromise solution. He pins great hopes on the Congress of Germans of the USSR to be opened in Moscow on October 18.

has allocated 38 million rubles to build the country's largest religious and cultural centre in Bukhara. In order to stop the "brain drain" in the republics, Tozhiddinov's association finances a university and schools, and provides the most gifted children of any nationality with an opportunity to study abroad. Under the organization's charity programme, a network of children's out-patient clinics is to be built in regions with a high rate of children's mortality. "We do not take money from anyone," says Tozhiddinov, "we earn it ourselves and give it to people."

Toshpulat studied at the Oriental department of Tashkent University. Upon graduation with an honours diploma, he began teaching the foundations of Islam and writing books which contained "classified information." He wrote a bulky monograph, *Problems of War and Peace in Islam*. Intensive work, however, did not prevent him from becoming a happy husband and the father of four children.

Y. Borovoi

* * *

Jan-Willem Mulder (left) and his pilot, Richard Beumer

Thirty-five-year-old Dutch cyclist **Jan-Willem Mulder**, world champion of the blind in group cycle race on the highway and in pursuit race on the track, came to Moscow to win the European championship for the blind. He appeared with Richard Beumer, his pilot (blind cyclists ride tandems led by an athlete who can see). Once again Mulder proved that he was unmatched in cycle racing for the blind. The Dutch duo won the pursuit race, was second in the group cycle race on the highway, and set five world records.

Upon graduation from the Social Academy in Arnhem, Jan-Willem worked as a programmer at the Dutch Finance Ministry. He spent his free time cycling. In 1982 he was the first at a competition in his native city of Apeldoorn, but having crossed the finishing line he was run down by a group of cyclists who were following him. When he was brought to hospital, doctors said he had almost completely lost his sight.

And still Jan-Willem did not part with sports. At first he went in for track and field athletics. Many stayers would envy his time in a semi-marathon race: his personal record was 1 hour 13 minutes. After several months of hard work and continuous practice, Mulder was able to return to his computer.

A.Lyubimov

* * *

Professor **Gao Yimin** has a great number of titles and posts. He is a member of the Drug Evaluation Committee of the Chinese Ministry of Public Health, Vice-Chairman of the Beijing Branch of the All-China Association of Acupuncture and Moxibustion, consultant for the Institute of Medicinal Preparations of the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, Council member of the Beijing Branch of the Chinese Association of Integration of Traditional and Western Medicine, and consultant for the Beijing Administration Bureau of Traditional Chinese Medicine. All this notwithstanding, Gao Yimin is an excellent physician.

He headed a small delegation of doctors to this country, where he held a 5-day-long seminar. Professor Gao Yimin and his colleagues showed their Soviet counterparts slides and videos about the treatment of patients with disturbances of the central nervous system, low and upper limbs' vessel pathologies, and demonstrated the "tuyna" massage and methods of acupuncture. The Chinese doctors tried to help several patients.

It seems that Soviet people have lost their interest in "TV healing" and are now returning to "contact" medicine. Preferably imported from abroad.

Risking your rubles is a noble cause

49-year-old **Alexander Krivtsov**, codirector of the Adaptek joint venture, calls American businessmen working on the Soviet market "helpless kids." He has come to this sad conclusion after analyzing the work of the American Trade House (ATH) he had set up in Moscow together with the American Bosmosco comany. The ATH presents the produce of some 120-odd US companies to be wholesaled in the USSR. However, due to the companies' poor knowledge of the Soviet market and their disregard of Soviet experts' opinion, the goods they offer do not sell well.

"Our people are oriented to a rather narrow group of goods, such as cheap clothes and footwear, household appliances and cheap food," says Krivtsov, "while our American partners would like to sell here golf clubs, sets of photographs of famous baseball players and hi-fi stereo loudspeakers, at several hundred dollars each."

Alexander Krivtsov sees a way out of the situation in setting up an international commercial centre, where he would like to open training courses to "adapt to the Soviet market."

Prior to his business activity, Krivtsov worked for many years at the scientific and research isntitute of the USSR State Committee for Material and Technical Supplies, and at present, he is an assistant professor at the Upgrading Skills Institute.

Krivtsov recommends that US businessmen start trading for rubles, without waiting for the ruble to become convertible.

"At present practically all bans have been lifted on foreign investments in the Soveit economy, provided they are done in rubles. I would advise Americans to risk today so as to win tomorrow," says Alexander Krivtsov.

However, so far only few companies, like the Mars chocolate concern, have dared to do this.

Krivtsov wants to help not only our overseas partners here, but he is also paving the way to the West for Soviet businessmen. In October, a "Soviet Store" is opening in Boston, where over 50 Russian organizations will sell their goods. Krivtsov hopes that he will find his place on the oversaturated US market.

A split in the writers' community

What is happening in the Writers' Union?

Sergei Chuprinin,
first deputy editor-in-chief
of the magazine *Znamya* (Banner)

It is almost impossible for the man in the street to understand the numerous reports about the events which are shaking the Writers' Union. Who is against whom? Who supports whom? What stand has been taken by one or another writer? And in general, why are writers engaged in something alien to them – either struggling for power, dividing the Union's property, or airing their dirty laundry in public, instead of devoting themselves to creative work removed from the cares and needs of daily life?

Certainly it is much easier not to take the trouble to get to the root of the discord in the Writers' Union and, having read about its scandalous, often nasty details in newspapers, exclaim: "A plague on all of them!"

But it would be useful to know that "all of them" are not tarred with the same brush, that there are at least three writers' centres now.

The first centre, the Union of Soviet Writers, reacted to *perestroika* by plunging into somnambulism. Devised by Stalin, Yagoda and Gorky in order to punish free-thinkers, foster "true party advocates" and implement the principles of socialist realism, this department of belles lettres has found itself useless under current conditions. The bureau of the Union's secretariat, elected by the 8th congress of writers five years ago to tackle key strategic tasks, apparently has not met since then. It seems there has never been a quorum at the meetings of the secretariat and the Union board. All power has been concentrated in the hands of four or five full-time and paid secretaries.

What power did they exercise? Over the republican organizations? They are sovereign now and pay no heed to directives from the centre. Over literary newspapers and magazines? But when an opportunity arose, the most respectable and popular of the writers' weeklies and monthlies immediately declared their independence. Over writers? But most of them seem to have forgotten the road to the Union's headquarters in Moscow.

What have the paid secretaries been doing, then? It should be remembered that all of them are gifted and widely known – writers Yuri Gribov and Nikolai Gorbachev, poet Konstantin Skvortsov and publicist Sergei Kozlov.

It appears that they have had a lot to do – organizing work or deciding whether or not to pay the foreign travel expenses of one or another writer, whom to help buy a car, a furniture suite, a country house or a sanatorium voucher, and whose requests to turn down. There have also been other lines of activity – suing the magazine *Znamya*, which escaped from the Union's control, taking the publishing house from the newspaper *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (Literary Gazette) and encouraging the dubious activity of various cooperatives and joint ventures set up under the aegis of the Union's Literary Fund, as well as publishing houses *Sovetsky Pisatel* (Soviet Writer) and *Stolitsa* (Capital City)...

One more thing, perhaps the main one, should be noted. It is the cowardly, servile stand taken by the Union's secretariat at the slightest change in the political climate. It will be recalled that the secretariat kept silent for a long time after the newspaper *Sovetskaya Rossiya* published Nina Andreyeva's article, which was assessed throughout the country as a manifesto of anti-*perestroika* forces. It did not make any statement when blood was shed in Sumgait, Tbilisi, and Vilnius, and when troops were brought into Moscow. The secretariat remained unperturbed when Smirnov-Ostashvili and his thugs created a foul anti-Semitic uproar in the Central Writers' Club.

The civil position of the Union of Soviet Writers can be formulated in this way: "See nothing, hear nothing, say nothing."

The formation of the April association within the framework of the Union of Soviet Writers is an attempt by a group of writers to dissociate themselves from the manoeuvring and dodging, shameful "discretion" and "balancing" of their leadership.

The paralysis of the will and the somnambulism, which struck the Union of Soviet Writers, have been timely exploited by another centre – the Union of Writers of the Russian Federation.

Yuri Bondarev and his assistants, with the connivance of Sergei Mikhalkov, have long been gathering, instructing and inciting those who furiously resist *perestroika* and the democratic renewal of society and culture – Communists and chauvinists, those who sing the praises of the armed forces General Staff and the collective-farm paradise, retired literary dignitaries and smart young writers who dream of gaining fame in the literary world thanks to ultra-patriotic rhetoric.

The Union of Writers of the Russian Federation has coordinated the inflammatory activity of the weeklies *Literaturnaya Rossiya* and *Moskovsky Literator* (Literary Russia and Moscow Writer), the magazines *Molodaya Gvardiya* (Young Guards), *Nash Sovremennik* (Our Contemporary), *Kuban* and to some extent, *Moskva (Moscow)* and *Slovo* (Word). Those periodicals are bent on saving Russia from democracy, universal human values, Gorbachev and, especially, Yeltsin, Shevardnadze and Yakovlev. It was the leaders of this Union who first composed a "Letter of 74," which compared *perestroika* to a national catastrophe, and then a "Letter of 53," which called for declaring a state of emergency without delay and solving social and economic problems through tough military measures.

The leaders of the Union of Writers of the Russian Federation seem to believe that the idea, once it has been imbibed by the people, can become a material force. For this reason the participation of such prominent writers as

Drawing by Hardi Volmer (Estonia)

Valentin Rasputin, Vasily Belov and Igor Shafarevich in the Union's propagandist actions is highly valued by its leaders because, thanks to the authoritative support of these writers, ordinary chauvinism, anti-Semitism and fear and dislike of the West look like respectable "national anxiety" and legitimate conservatism.

Ideas aside, the leaders of this Union seem to have properly learned Stalin's axion, which says: "The personnel decide everything."

In strict accordance with the rules, the secretariats of the Union of Writers of the Russian Federation and the Moscow writers' organization, which might be called the third writers' centre, form selection commissions that determine whether an applicant can be admitted to the Union of Soviet Writers or not. Incidentally, and this is very important, it is the secretariats which have the final say in any case. This means that they can always "correct" the selection commission if it errs.

As a result, dozens of talented writers, often already well known, remained outside the Union, because they were suspected of democratic leanings or at least of being "ungovernable." At the same time, hundreds or perhaps thousands of mediocrities have been freely admitted to the Union, though they are known only for their ultra-patriotic phraseology and readiness to faithfully serve those who "made" them Russian writers. The outcome of such practices is obvious: It is the tyranny of the aggressively obedient majority, which will gain the upper hand in any "democratic" voting.

Having such a powerful "battering ram," it is easy to launch an attack. Obeying orders from the Union of Writers of the Russian Federation, its members, who quite understandably hate "simply writers," have risen to their "last and decisive battle." However, they failed to attain all their objectives. For instance, they could not take under their control the magazines *Oktyabr* (October) and *Volga* and *Ural*, which declared their independence. But they managed to impose the newspaper *Den* (Day) – an openly chauvinistic periodical advocating great-power ambitions and edited by Alexander Prokhanov, on the Union of Soviet Writers, form docile boards of the *Sovetsky Pisatel* and *Stolitsa* publishing houses, appoint "their" people to leading posts in the literary funds of the USSR, the Russian Federation and Moscow, and oust once and for all more or less known writers form the leadership of the Russian and Moscow writers' organizations.

All this was to be crowned with a full and complete victory of Union members over "simply writers" at a national congress planned for this autumn. The ambitious plans would have been realized if only due to the fact that owing to the tyranny of the aggressively obedient majority, practically none of the democratically-minded writers was elected a delegate to the congress.

Could such a state of affairs be tolerated? Alas, many writers tolerated it, though they nurtured the idea of forming a union of independent writers as an alternative to the present structures, though the Leningrad writers' organization broke into two parts, and a split divided the Association of Moscow poets.

Their patience was exhausted during the August 19-21 coup, when it became clear to everyone that the differences between writers go far beyond the limits of ideological and creative pluralism; when it turned out that the "Address to the People," signed not only by the conspirators, but also by writers Bondarev, Rasputin and Prokhanov, was a sort of first programme of the putschists; when it became known that the newspaper *Den* edited by Prokhanov was secretly patronized by Dmitry Yazov, Oleg Baklanov, Valentin Varennikov and Yuri Prokofiev; when many leaders of the Union of Writers of the Russian Federation openly supported the putschists' actions, while the paid full-time secretaries of the Union of Soviet Writers were disgracefully cowardly, as usual.

Immediately after the defeat of the putschists, an attempt was made to improve the climate in the Writers' Union (in all of the three Moscow writers' centres), but in vain. Very little was needed for a radical improvement of the situation. The secretaries, who had compromised themselves and the Union as a whole, should have resigned, as they had been urged to do.

As was to be expected, they flatly refused to do so. The decisions made by one meeting of writers were instantly opposed by the decisions of another meeting of writers, and a war of resolutions, decisions and quorums began. Luckily, it did not last long, because the feuding parties understood that there would be no victors, and co-existence within one writers' organization would be impossible.

It was necessary to form different organizations. What is now taking place in the Writers' Union reminds one of a divorce case. It is not a pleasant procedure but there is no other way out, because there can be no union between the writers who defended the Russian government during the coup and the writers who acted as ideologists of the putsch, between those whose books are read by any intellectual family and those who are prepared to fight for the right to be considered a Russian patriotic writer, even though he may be a mediocre writer or may not write anything at all.

What are the prospects?

There are two Moscow writers' organizations now. One is led by Vladimir Gusev, Boris Sheremetiev, Irina Strelkova and other members of the Writers' Union. The other is led by Chernichenko, Nagibin, Vinogradov and other writers.

The establishment of a union (or a community) of Russian writers has been announced. The leaders of this organization invite all writers who no longer want to bear responsibility for the inflammatory slogans and chauvinistic actions of Bondarev, Kunyayev, Prokhanov, Lykoshin and Romanov.

How will the situation further develop? This depends to a large extent on the writers and their sense of civil duty and on the books that will be written and read.

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Independent political investigation

As I was leafing through Saturday papers on a hot July night, I came across a sensational report in *Sovetskaya Rossiya* which quoted David Stockman, the prominent American economist, Director of the US Office of Management and Budget under Reagan, as saying in a *Repubblica* (Italy) interview that Gorbachev has saved the US from collapse. Asked by the interviewer whether he was joking, Mr. Stockman replied: "Not at all. In the early 1980s, the USSR and the US were heading for economic collapse in what was a kind of a race. Luckily for us, the USSR beat us to it, even though by a narrow margin. The United States then suffered from the worst budget deficit and from the most dangerous paralysis of power – ever in its history. The collapse of the USSR helped it stop rearmament and review its economic and social programmes." Stockman said that had it not been for Gorbachev, the US would have gone bankrupt within four to five years.

The interview put me out, and it was quite some time before I calmed down. What a chance we had missed! Had we made an extra effort and held out for four or five more years, the United States would have suffered an economic and political collapse, and the situation would have been quite the opposite of what it is now: perestroika would have been launched in the US and, following it, in other capitalist countries; racial and ethnic conflicts would have flared up there; a drive for capitalism with a human face would have been started; the states and blocs would have fallen apart. Due to US pressure on other countries weakening sharply, the aggressive North Atlantic bloc (NATO) would have disintegrated, the FRG would have joined the GDR which, in order not to aggravate the crisis, would have committed itself to build housing complexes in the United States, Britain and France for the troops withdrawn from united Germany.

With a view to stemming the flow to socialist countries of the poor from Western Europe, the US and Canada we would have granted them credits, sent them food parcels and discussed ways of saving their economics from a total collapse.

After some hesitations, the Big Seven (Konstantin Chernenko, Erich Honecker, Gustav Husak, Wojciech Jaruzelski, Todor Zhivkov, Nicolae Ceausescu and Fidel Castro) would have agreed to meet, following their traditional conference, with George Bush and to discuss with him the problems connected with aid to and perestroika in the United States. Instead of granting credits, the conference would have decided to render that country all-round assistance in transforming its capitalist, exploitative and militarized economy into a progressive socialist one, in converting its munitions industry to civil production, in promoting socialist democracy – specifically, in reducing the number of political parties there to a minimum. As a writer once put it, the more parties there are in a country, the less goods are found in its stores.

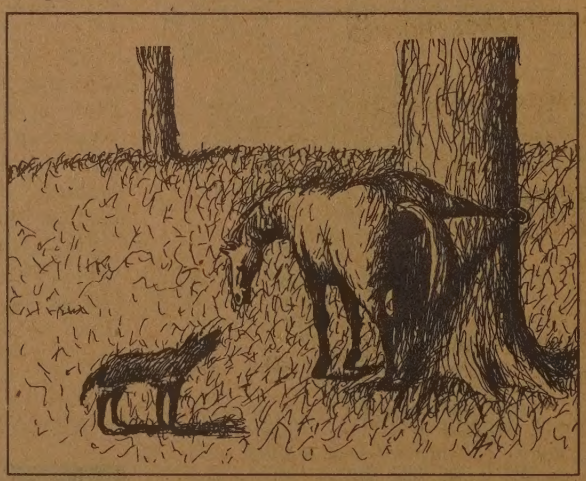
In other words, a clear-cut programme of building developed socialism in the decaying West would have been worked out.

All this would have materialized if any of our tested leaders (Mikhail Suslov, Leonid Brezhnev, Yuri Andropov, Dmitry Ustinov or Konstantin Chernenko) had lived for another 5-6 years. In his time Marshal Brezhnev warned that the United States sought to draw us into the arms race so that we should plunge into economic crisis (it was probably for that purpose that the US called off compulsory military service in the 1970s, stopped the production of chemical weapons, withdrew its troops from Vietnam and carried some other distracting manoeuvres). Our dear Leonid Ilyich pointed out, however, that the US would never succeed in undermining our economy because we possessed rich resources and a high industrial potential, and because ours was a hard-working people. For that pithy remark alone, Comrade Leonid Brezhnev ought to have been promoted from Marshal to Generalissimo, even though posthumously.

However, our ideologically staunch and shrewd leaders – all five of them died or, more likely, were "done in" by secret services over a period of three years or so.

What kind of services, you may ask. Obviously, by the secret services of the countries threatened with economic collapse and paralysis of power. That was why the CIA got down to a systematic elimination of our most prominent leaders. It had rich experience in "work" of that sort. Considering that having forgotten the slogan "Soviet means excellent," many of our ailing leaders preferred foreign medicines – and even foreign doctors sometimes – it was not much of a problem for foreign secret agents to liquidate those leaders who did not suit the capitalists.

But who of the leaders did suit the capitalists, then? The answer is quite obvious. As Margaret Thatcher put it (when Konstantin Chernenko was still alive), "Mr Gorbachev can be dealt with." At about the same time, ex-CIA chief(!) George Bush told a Soviet diplomat he was certain that Gorbachev would be out next General Secretary. The diplomat communicated these words to Andrei Gromyko, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the latter put forward Mikhail Gorbachev's candidature for the post of General Secretary. Yegor Ligachev and, following him, other members of the Politburo (which no longer had in it the staunch and principled leaders of the old school) rashly opted for Gorbachev who, right upon coming to office, launched a campaign for perestroika, reorganization, glasnost, acceleration, etc.; as a matter of fact that was a campaign for saving the US from collapse and disintegration!



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